12 Days of
Holiday Cookies!

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52 **Festive Holiday** Recipes + Ideas

Gingerbread Cake of Your Dreams

Epic Holiday
Bûches de Noël
+ Steps for Success

Baking with
Satsumas

gingerbread layer cake, page 113

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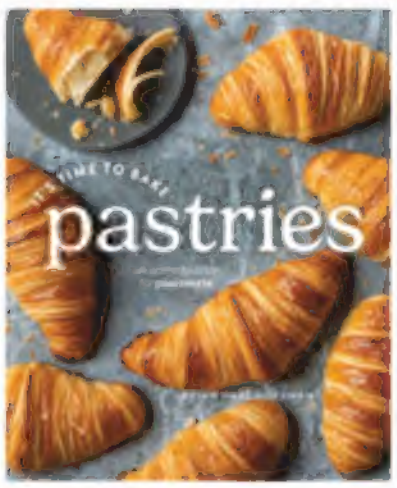

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BY BRIAN HART HOFFMAN

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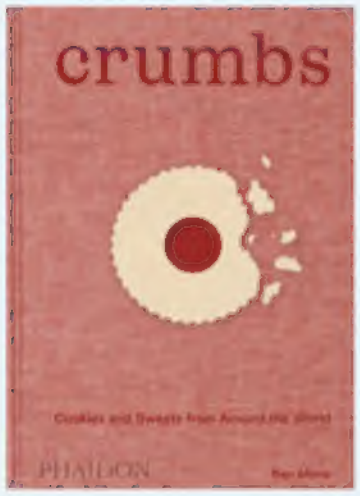

Crumbs: Cookies and Sweets from Around the World

BY BEN MIMS

With new takes on old-world recipes and time-honored classics, Ben Mims's newest cookbook is a delicious tour of global flavors. You'll love exploring its nearly 300 recipes such as Pakistani Cumin Seed Cookies, Welsh Griddled Currant Cookies, and various holiday-themed bakes.

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PEANUT-CHOCOLATE–STUFFED COOKIES

Thanks to Bonne Maman® Peanut Chocolate Spread, these cookies feature an irresistible combination of nutty richness and decadent cocoa. Each bite of these soft and chewy treats delivers a melty peanut-chocolate filling, a creamy glaze, and crunchy peanuts that will surely satisfy any sweet craving.

Makes 12 cookies

- **1 (12.3-ounce) jar (350 grams) Bonne Maman® Peanut Chocolate Spread**
- **½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- **1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar**
- **1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
- **1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- **1¼ cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour**
- **1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) cornstarch**
- **¾ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt, divided**
- **¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder**
- **½ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- **2 tablespoons (30 grams) heavy whipping cream**
- **1 teaspoon (5 grams) unsalted butter, melted**

Garnish: crushed salted peanuts

1. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. In a small bowl, reserve 2 tablespoons (30 grams) peanut chocolate spread for glaze. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop remaining peanut chocolate spread (25 grams each), and place on a prepared pan; freeze until firm, 10 to 15 minutes. Using a small offset spatula, shape each portion of spread into a smooth ball; freeze until solid, about 1 hour.

3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat softened butter and brown sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Beat in egg yolk. Beat in vanilla.

4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cornstarch, ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt, and baking powder. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl.

5. Using a 1-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (17 grams each), and place on another prepared pan. Gently flatten each portion of dough. Place 1 scoop of frozen peanut chocolate spread onto 1 flattened dough piece; top with another piece of flattened dough. Press edges of dough together to seal; roll into 1½-inch balls. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Freeze until firm, about 10 minutes.

6. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

7. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are golden brown, 16 to 18 minutes. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks.

8. Add confectioners' sugar, cream, melted butter, and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt to reserved 2 tablespoons (30 grams) peanut chocolate spread; whisk until smooth. Drizzle onto cooled cookies. Garnish with peanuts, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

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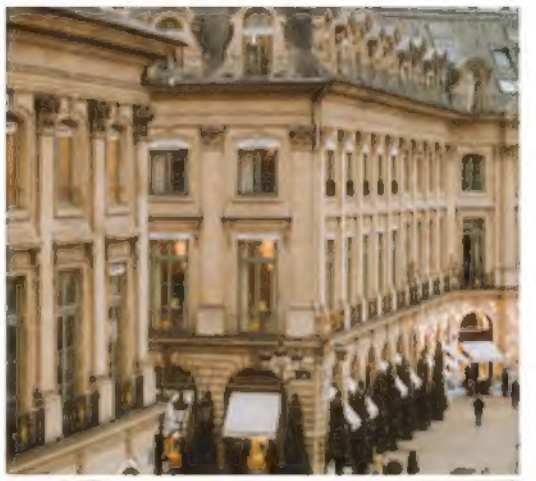

Announcing Our 2025 Baking Retreats!

Don't miss these epic international destinations:

- **Stockholm, Sweden, March 2–9**
- **Dublin, Ireland, March 11–20**
- **Amalfi Coast of Italy, April 27–May 3 and May 4–10**
- **Danube River Cruise, September 21–28**
- **San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, October 19–24**
- **Holiday Baking in Paris, December 5–10**

Plus, join us in Birmingham, Alabama, for retreats in our test kitchen:

- **Laminated Dough Master Class, February 6–9**
- **Decorated Cakes and Cookies, April 11–14**
- **Fall Baking, October 10–13**
- **Italian Holiday Baking, November 7–10**

➔ Get full details at *bakefromscratch.com/baking-retreats.*

baking school

Join *Bake from Scratch* and Williams Sonoma live on Monday nights for our online Baking School classes. Each class is devoted to one or two recipes so you can see the entire process from start to finish while being able to chat virtually with Brian Hart Hoffman, guest instructors, and other attendees. You can also join our private Facebook group to share your bakes with other baking enthusiasts.

➔ Purchase tickets at *williams-sonoma.squadup.com.*

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The Most Wonderful Time of the Year for Baking

Photo by Joann Pai

How has the year passed so quickly? A question I ask myself more and more as time marches on. It was always said to me that the years move faster with age . . . and I am certainly feeling that now more than ever. With this issue, we close out the ninth year of *Bake from Scratch* and prepare for a big 10th anniversary in 2025.

One might think that, after almost a decade of bringing you seasonal recipes throughout the year, we would be running out of ideas, but the opposite is true when I look at what's coming. There are so many more people to feature, cultures to celebrate, ingredients to explore, and recipes that deserve their moment in the spotlight. I like to close out each year with reflections of gratitude, and that includes you—the global baking community. Thank you for your support, ideas, and excitement for this brand I love so much.

You might know that France is a place that's near and dear to my heart, and Paris is the city I call my heart home. In this issue, you'll find a few reasons why! From a magical visit to the Ritz Paris and the Ritz Escoffier School, where holiday magic abounds (and yes, a recipe from their famed repertoire is included for you to enjoy at home!), to canelés baked in copper molds that have been on our to-bake list for far too long and fantastical takes on bûches de Noël. Once you devour these pages, make plans to join me next December in Paris for our 10th anniversary celebration (and yes, we'll stay at the famed Ritz Paris for a night!).

No holiday season is complete without cookies—lots and lots of cookies—so have no fear, as we've got you covered there, too, with some fun takes on favorite flavors. How about a Cookie Butter-Stuffed Snickerdoodles or Peppermint-Chocolate Sandwich Cookies covered in ganache that will surely replace the popular version found at a certain grocery chain? That's not all; turn to the 12 Days of Holiday Cookies story on page 57 and decide which one will be your new favorite.

Speaking of favorites, gingerbread is always at the top of my list. Whether you dress it up or keep it simple, our base recipe easily goes from everyday treat to showstopping layer cake that will be the talk of your holiday gathering. However you bake it your own, this one is a keeper.

I wish each of you all festive holiday celebrations and a happy new year! Preheat your oven; it's time to bake!

Brian

Brian Hart Hoffman
Editor-in-Chief

SAVORY CHEESE TARTLETS WITH SPICY TOMATO JAM

These savory cheese tartlets are a perfect appetizer for all your holiday festivities. The delicious blend of nutty BelGioioso® Parmesan Cheese and mildly sweet BelGioioso® Baking Fresh Mozzarella Cheese creates a soft texture and bold flavor in the tartlet crust, resulting in a buttery, cheesy base for the sweet heat of the jam. A final topping of mozzarella adds an irresistibly melty finish.

Makes 14 tartlets

Jam:

- **2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter**
- **¾ cup (108 grams) chopped yellow onion**
- **2 tablespoons (20 grams) chopped seeded jalapeño (optional)**
- **1½ pounds (681 grams) plum tomatoes, finely chopped**
- **2 tablespoons (30 grams) distilled white vinegar**
- **1 tablespoon (12 grams) granulated sugar**
- **1 tablespoon (14 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar**
- **1¼ teaspoons (3 grams) kosher salt**
- **½ teaspoon crushed red pepper**
- **½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground black pepper**

Crust:

- **½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- **½ cup (47 grams) grated BelGioioso® Parmesan Cheese**
- **½ cup (65 grams) shredded BelGioioso® Baking Fresh Mozzarella Cheese**
- **1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
- **2 teaspoons (2 grams) minced fresh rosemary (optional)**
- **½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- **½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground black pepper**
- **1¼ cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour**

- **2 ounces (56 grams) BelGioioso® Baking Fresh Mozzarella Cheese, torn into small pieces**

1. For jam: In a small saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion and jalapeño (if using); cook, stirring occasionally, until tender and lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Stir in tomatoes, vinegar, sugars, 1 teaspoon (3 grams) salt, red pepper, and black pepper; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, and simmer, stirring and mashing tomatoes every 5 minutes, until thickened, 30 to 40 minutes. Stir in remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. Let cool completely. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks. Let come to room temperature before using.

2. Lightly spray 14 (¾-inch-tall) 2½-inch round fluted tartlet pans with baking spray with flour; place prepared pans on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet.

3. For crust: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until creamy, about 1 minute. Add Parmesan, shredded mozzarella, egg yolk, rosemary (if using), salt, and black pepper, beating until combined, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating until a smooth dough forms and is no longer crumbly, 1 to 2 minutes.

4. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 28 grams each), and press into bottom and up sides of prepared tartlet pans. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 20 minutes.

5. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

6. Bake until edges are lightly browned, about 20 minutes. Gently press down center of each crust. Fill each crust with about 1 tablespoon (15 grams) jam; top with torn mozzarella. Bake until jam is warm and cheese is melted, 8 to 12 minutes more. Best served immediately.

*pro tip

If you don't have tartlet pans, you can also use a muffin pan. Fill mini muffin cups with 1 tablespoon (16 grams) tart crust dough and 1½ teaspoons (8 grams) jam and bake for about 15 minutes, or fill regular muffin cups with 2 tablespoons (41 grams) dough and 2 tablespoons (30 grams) jam and bake for about 20 minutes.

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FIND RECIPES

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LIZ KIGHT

RECIPE CORRECTIONS
While we aim for perfection with each of our recipes, we do make the occasional mistake. Here are corrections from recent issues.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024
Everything Pretzels, page 39
In ingredients, the temperature for warm water should be 110°F/43°C to 115°F/46°C.

MAY/JUNE 2024
Butter Ring Cookies, page 87
Add vanilla extract with egg in step 1.

credits

Page 15—Photos courtesy of Tay or Stewart

Expertly tested recipes featuring premium ingredients

The recipes in each issue pass through the *Bake from Scratch* test kitchen. Each is flavorful and distinctive and developed with your kitchen success in mind.

These products are partners of *Bake from Scratch* magazine and used exclusively in our recipes.

BelGioioso

We pride ourselves on the finest recipes, and BelGioioso® Cheese helps us get there one ingredient faster. Whether you're snacking, cooking, or baking, they provide unmatched premium Italian-style cheeses. From bold, flavor-filled agedvarieties to soft, creamy, fresh spreadable cheeses, BelGioioso®brings the JOY by providing excellence in every bite.

Bonne Maman

There's something about a homemade treat that puts a smile on our faces, and that's exactly why Bonne Maman is our go-to for preserves and fruit spreads. Made with simple and natural ingredients of the finest quality, Bonne Maman's wide variety of fruit preserves, jellies, and artisan spreads ensures our from-scratch recipes taste fresh.

C&H

Whether we're creating a simple cookie or laminated pastry, C&H® Sugar is a staple in our test kitchen. Their granulated, brown sugar, and powdered sugar are perfect for all types of baked goods, and we know we can count on C&H® Sugar to provide the perfect sweet balance with every grain.

RED STAR

When using Red Star® yeast in our recipes, we can rest easy knowing we have a reliable product to take our breads from ordinary to sensational. No matter the type of yeast, Red Star® provides consistent performance to make all our yeasted bakes a success.

WHOOPIE PIES FOR THE WIN

Meet mother and daughter Lynn and Taylor Stewart, winners of the 2023 Williams Sonoma Peppermint Bark Off contest

How did the two of you decide to enter the contest?

Taylor Stewart: I follow both Williams Sonoma and *Bake from Scratch* on Instagram, and Mom and I have been using Williams Sonoma products for years. I saw the contest was posted around fall of last year and thought we should give it a try. We're always baking during the holidays, so we thought why not try some cookies for this contest and see how it goes?

What inspired you to create whoopie pies?

Lynn Stewart: We were brainstorming what to make with the peppermint bark, and our first attempt was a s'mores peppermint bark brownie, which did not go well! Taylor and I were talking about what else we could do and thought of a whoopie pie. I've been making whoopie pies for probably over 20 years. My mom and my grandmother from the South have always loved MoonPies and started to make them at home. When Taylor and her brother were kids, I would make different versions. My Italian grandmother has a chocolate drop cookie recipe that I absolutely love, so I worked on making a lighter, fluffier version of them, and Taylor crushed the peppermint bark to roll onto the edges. We loved how they turned out.

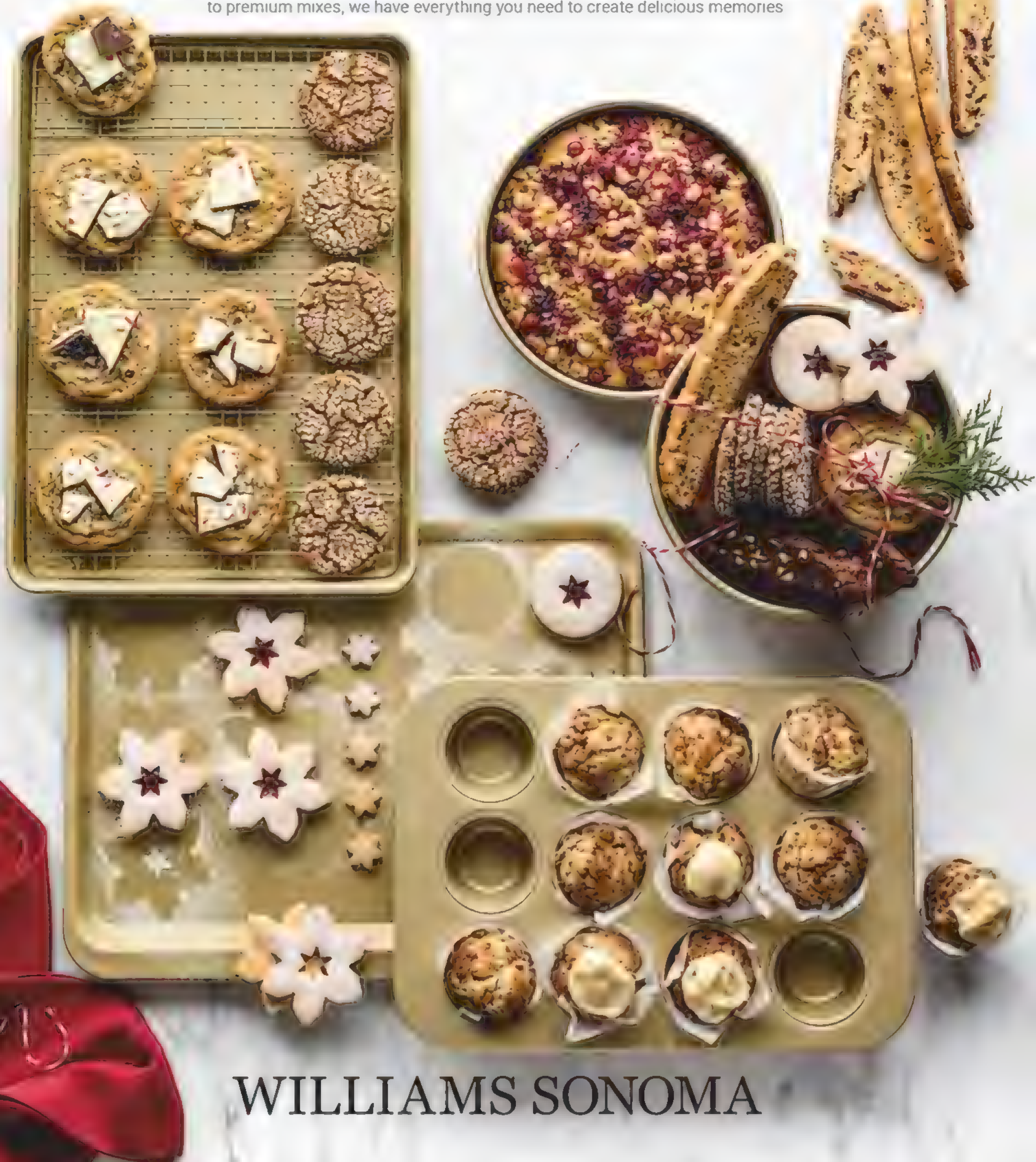
Taylor, you're now in culinary school; what led you to that?

TS: I've always had a passion for cooking and baking, but I also have some food allergies and dietary restrictions that require me to cook for myself. So, I thought it might be good to attend a school where I can learn to cook and not have to figure things out constantly. I wasn't thinking of attending this year, but after we won the Bark Off contest, I was able to use the prize to help fund my school materials. I got new pots, pans, and baking equipment, and the KitchenAid mixer has been amazing! After all the hours I've spent researching and developing my own recipes, I've begun posting them on my blog, *A Conscious Kitchen*. I hope it helps people with similar struggles to enjoy cooking and baking for themselves.

Find Lynn and Taylor's Peppermint Bark Whoopie Pies recipe at *bakefromscratch.com*. Find Taylor's blog at *aconsciouskitchen.com*.

’Tis the Season for Baking

Share the joy this holiday with freshly baked treats. From expertly designed bakeware and tools to premium mixes, we have everything you need to create delicious memories



WILLIAMS SONOMA

SUCCESS BY THE DOZEN

Bake your way to bliss with these helpful hints and tips for your best holiday cookies

Freezer-Friendly

Plan ahead for cookies at the ready

ROLLED, DROPPED, AND SHAPED: Place cookie dough balls or cutout shapes on parchment paper-lined baking sheets, and freeze until they're firm. Once firm, transfer them to a heavy-duty plastic bag, and freeze for up to 3 months. Be sure to label and date the bag. Bake frozen cookie dough as your recipe directs, adding 2 to 3 minutes to the baking time.

SLICE-AND-BAKE: Wrap dough logs tightly in plastic wrap and then place in a heavy-duty plastic bag. Label and date the bag, and freeze for up to 3 months. Let the dough thaw in the refrigerator until it's sliceable but still firm; slice and bake as directed.

Essential Equipment

Trusty tools to start you off right

SPRING-LOADED SCOOP: Portion and drop dough with ease, precision, and consistent sizing for even baking.

METAL COOKIE CUTTERS: Thick metal cutters go cleanly through dough without catching or denting. Simpler designs will maintain their shape better during baking than intricate patterns.

LORANN RED VELVET PEPPERMINT COOKIES

¾	cup salted butter, softened	2	cups all-purpose flour
¾	cup brown sugar	1	teaspoon baking soda
¼	cup granulated sugar	½	teaspoon salt
1	egg	¾	teaspoon LorAnn Natural Peppermint Bakery Emulsion
1	tablespoon buttermilk	1-2	teaspoons LorAnn Red Velvet Bakery Emulsion
¾	tablespoon LorAnn Natural Vanilla Extract	1 ¾	cups white chocolate chips, divided

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F.
2. Using a stand mixer with paddle attachment or a bowl with an electric hand mixer, cream together the butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar for 2 minutes. The mixture should be light in color and fluffy.
3. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and add the egg, buttermilk, and vanilla extract. Mix until well combined.
4. Add the flour, baking soda, and salt. Mix until the dough forms.
5. Divide the dough evenly between two bowls. Add LorAnn's Peppermint Bakery Emulsion to the first bowl and mix well. Add LorAnn's Red Velvet Bakery Emulsion to the second bowl and mix well.
6. If adding white chocolate chips, do so at this step. Divide the chips between the two bowls and fold them in until evenly distributed.
7. Combine the doughs. Gently press the doughs together to form a single mass. With your hands, lightly twist and fold the dough mass a few times. Be careful not to over-knead; just a few gentle folds are enough to create a marbled pattern. The dough should start to show a swirled, marbled effect.
8. Scoop out the dough into 3 tablespoon portions. Arrange on a pan, allowing room to flatten and spread.
9. Bake for 10-12 minutes, the cookie will flatten and spread slightly. The center should no longer look wet and glossy.
10. Allow the cookies to cool on the cookie sheet for 15 minutes.

Store at room temperature for up to 3 days. The cookies can be frozen for up to 3 months.

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ROLLING PIN: A long barrel with a uniform thickness allows you to make fewer passes, which means less rolling of dough and more-tender cookies after baking.

RULER: A ruler is essential for measuring thickness when rolling out dough and for cutting cookies and bars into equal sizes with straight sides.

BAKING SHEETS: A set of light-colored baking sheets allows you to rotate pans in and out of the oven without any wait time.

PARCHMENT PAPER: Parchment paper protects the bottom of your cookies from burning and keeps your baking sheets clean. Plus, you can use parchment paper for several rounds of baking; toss it when the edges begin to brown.

SPATULAS: A small thin offset spatula lets you delicately handle cutout dough without damaging its shape, and a flat, wide spatula gets fully and securely under baked cookies when transferring them from baking sheet to cooling rack.

WIRE RACKS: Wire racks allow air to circulate around cookies so they cool quickly and evenly. Choose racks with a tight grid for proper support so cookies don't sag in the center or on the sides as they cool.

DIY Décor

Embellish your cookies with ease

DELICATE DUSTING: A light dusting of confectioners' sugar or cocoa powder onto a cookie always exudes understated elegance.

PRETTY PATTERN: Use a paper stencil or doily for an intricate design. The confectioners' sugar or cocoa will reveal a lovely pattern with no skill required to create it.

SHIMMERY SUGAR: Roll dough balls or logs of dough in granulated, turbinado, or sparkling sugar for glistening color and subtle crunch, or give them a topping of festive sprinkles in your favorite holiday shapes and colors.

Pretty Packaging

Assemble your homemade goodies for gifting

TINS AND BOXES: Choose a container made of sturdy material to protect your cookies from breaking and that can fully seal to keep food fresh.

PROTECTIVE PAPERS: Line your containers with food-safe decorative tissue, parchment, or wax paper to help prevent breaking and in between layers of cookies to keep them from sticking to each other.

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COOKIES WITH A LEGACY

Katie and her niece Marlo baking Aunt Esther's cookies

Bake from Scratch

food stylist Katie Moon Dickerson shares her family's beloved holiday cookie tradition that's been going strong for nearly a century

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In the 1930s, my great-great-aunt Esther, the younger sister of my great-grandmother Amelia, began a tradition that has woven itself into the fabric of our family's history. After she moved from the South to Minnesota, Aunt Esther would send her homemade cookies every Christmas to her sister's 10 children back in Perry County, Alabama. These cookies were more than just a holiday treat—they were a symbol of love, connection, and the warmth of family ties that spanned across states. Four generations and almost a century later, this cherished tradition continues. While we no longer wait for Aunt Esther's cookies to arrive in the mail, the joy of baking them together during the holidays remains a special time for our family. We've modernized the tradition a bit, using almond extract in the glaze for its clarity, though you can always opt for vanilla. The cookies themselves are soft and fluffy, perfect for baking with little ones who love to decorate them just as much as they enjoy making the dough. These cookies, lovingly known as "Aunt Esther Cookies" in our thick Southern drawl, are more than just a recipe—they are a testament to the enduring bonds of family and a reminder that the simplest traditions often carry the most profound meaning.

AUNT ESTHER'S SUGAR COOKIES

Makes 36 to 48 cookies

Recipe by Katie Moon Dickerson

When I make these cookies with my nieces, I sometimes have the cookies already baked so all they have to do is decorate. They also love rolling out the dough and cutting it into shapes, and one of the great things about this recipe is that the flour added when rolling out the dough doesn't make the cookies tough or dry.

1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
2 cups (400 grams) granulated sugar
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature
1 tablespoon (15 grams) water
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
4 cups (500 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
Spreadable Glaze (recipe follows)
Assorted holiday sprinkles, nonpareils, jimmies, dragées, and sanding sugar, for decorating

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, granulated sugar, and salt at medium speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
2. In a small bowl, stir together 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water and baking soda. Add baking soda mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed until well combined. Beat in vanilla. Gradually add flour, beating until well combined. Divide dough in half, and wrap each in plastic wrap. (Dough will be very sticky, so it's best to portion dough straight onto plastic wrap.) Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight.
3. Line rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. On a heavily floured surface, place half of dough, and generously dust with flour. (Keep remaining dough refrigerated until ready to use.) Roll dough to ½-inch thickness. Using 3- to 4-inch assorted holiday cutters, cut dough, rerolling scraps and cutting to use all dough, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Repeat procedure with remaining dough. (If dough becomes too soft or sticky, add more flour, or refrigerate dough for 15 minutes.) Refrigerate until firm, about 15 minutes.
5. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
6. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are lightly browned and tops are dry, 7 to 8 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
7. Top cooled cookies with Spreadable Glaze and decorations as desired. Let stand until glaze is set, about 1 hour. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

*pro tip

Dissolving baking soda in water is a holdover from long ago to help disperse it evenly in a recipe since it can be prone to clumping. Also, these cookies aren't in the oven for very long, so it starts the activation.

Spreadable Glaze

Makes about 3 cups

3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar
⅔ cup (160 grams) cold heavy whipping cream
½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon (1 gram) almond extract (optional)
Assorted liquid or gel food coloring (optional)

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, cold cream, vanilla, salt, and almond extract (if using). Divide mixture among small bowls, and tint with food coloring (if using) as desired. Use immediately.

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WHERE THE satsumas GROW

Welcoming the simple pleasures of this treasured citrus

BY AMBER WILSON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BATHIE AND KYLE CARPENTER
STYLING BY MAGGIE RATLIFF

My grandpa asks me, "You want to pick some satsumas?" while slowly sipping his strong, smoky coffee. I smile and nod excitedly as I finish getting my coffee ready. The sun is just beginning to glide through the tops of the tall pine trees on this crisp November morning. A tropical tinge of orange glows among the glossy emerald leaves of the satsuma tree nestled at the corner of my grandparents' backyard in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Steam spirals from my chicory coffee as we walk across the flat lawn. His breath glistens in the cold air while he explains that we need to pick as many satsumas as we can to keep them from the possums and armadillos, who also adore the sweet citrus. I don't blame them.

The tree's massive canopy spreads 25 feet. A dozen two-by-fours brace the heavier branches to prevent them from touching the ground. It's the grandest satsuma tree I have ever seen. An old wooden ladder rests next to the tree. I perch my coffee on the flat middle rung and lean against it with a precious satsuma. I gently pierce the thin, leathery skin with my thumbnail, unleashing the fruit's lovely floral, sweet perfume. My mouth instantly waters.

Once it's peeled, I tear the satsuma in half, delicately removing the velvet ropes that hold the fruit to the skin. Slowly, I separate the plump crescents, stopping only when I find the secret segment called the "kiss," a tiny sliver of satsuma sandwiched between two segments, saved for someone you love. I set the "kiss" aside for my little one and silently savor each cold segment; its thin flesh gives way under my teeth, and a cool rush of bright and sweet pulp—still brimming with life from the tree—fills my mouth. I finish my coffee and twist satsumas off the tree, gently placing them in plastic grocery bags to carry our haul inside to share with the rest of the family. This time of year invites many beautiful moments, but not many are as gratifying as enjoying a satsuma. And it's all thanks to a woman named Anna.

While on a cultural mission in Japan, Anna Schoyer, the wife of Robert Bruce Van Valkenburgh, the U.S. Ambassador to Japan, discovered a delightful fruit known as *unshu mikan* on Kyushu Island. Satsumas were named after the former Satsuma Province in Japan where Anna first savored its sweetness. In 1878, she arranged for 75 Owari Satsuma trees to be shipped from Kyushu Island to her home and planted behind her house on an 18-acre estate outside Jacksonville, Florida. The fruit's popularity grew rapidly due to its sweet taste and easy-to-peel skin, leading to increased demand.

By the early 1900s, 1 million Owari Satsuma trees had been imported from Japan and planted across the Gulf Coast states, from northern Florida to Texas, establishing it as a major commercial citrus variety in the South.

In the late 1890s, severe winter weather presented challenges, and many groves were devastated as growers realized the limitations of satsuma's cold hardiness. The industry gradually recovered despite setbacks in the early 1900s from more harsh winters. Growers responded by planting more cold-hardy varieties of satsumas and adopting diverse agricultural practices to reduce risks from unpredictable weather patterns. Today, satsuma trees continue to endure hurricanes, floods, and freezes, showing resilience like the people who cultivate them.

There are so few ingredients that remain truly seasonal that when satsumas are finally available, I can't help but feel evangelical about them, borderline obsessive. When shopping for satsumas, look at the citrus's skin to indicate freshness. You'll want to avoid fruits with blemishes or soft spots. They should give off a delicately sweet, fragrant citrus aroma.

Bake with Satsumas

In this issue, don't miss:

Satsuma Cream Tart, **page 50**

Satsuma-Pistachio Financiers, **page 51**

Satsuma-Cherry Kringle, **page 53**

Pomegranate-Satsuma Shortcakes, **page 55**

Satsuma-Almond Cake, **page 56**

Mandarins, tangerines, clementines, and satsumas—what's the difference between them?

Because they all look alike, it's easy to confuse these citrus fruits, but they have their own unique characteristics.

Mandarins encompass a variety of oranges, including tangerines, clementines, and satsumas. They're generally smaller and sweeter than typical oranges, with a flatter shape and thin, loose skin that makes them easy to peel. **Tangerines** are a specific type of mandarin known for their bright orange color and slightly tougher skin. They have a tangier flavor compared to other mandarins. **Clementines** are the smallest type of mandarin, known for being exceptionally sweet and seedless and having smooth, shiny, red-orange skins. They're easier to peel than tangerines but not as effortless as satsumas. Originating from Japan more than 700 years ago, **satsumas** are a lighter orange color and incredibly sweet, juicy, and seedless. They're renowned for being the easiest mandarin variety to peel.

While it may be tempting to keep your beautiful satsumas at room temperature, especially if they still have their leaves intact, they'll stay fresh longer in the fridge. Store them with good airflow to keep them dry—moisture can shorten their shelf life and is therefore their nemesis. Satsumas can last about a week (or even longer) in the fridge, giving you plenty of time to savor their lovely flavor.

These bright beauties have the power to transform holiday favorites like gingerbread, panettone, buttery brioche dough, and ginger molasses cookies into something truly magical. Another wonderful way to capture the delicate, complex essence of satsumas is by making marmalade and candying the vibrant peels.

Since satsuma season is so short-lived, lasting only from late fall to early winter, I have no shame in stretching the pleasure this sweet citrus provides. This is when I turn to the freezer, which ensures I can enjoy the lovely flavor of satsumas for months on end. Satsuma zest, segments, and juice freeze beautifully! Scrub the peels well and use a rasp-style grater to zest the fruit. Freeze the zest in a single layer in a heavy-duty plastic zipper bag, removing all the air. You don't have to thaw it whenever you want to use it in a recipe.

After zesting the satsumas, you have two options. You can juice them and freeze the juice in ice cube trays for later use in recipes or add to your favorite cocktail glass and cover with prosecco for a wonderfully festive and fizzy satsuma bellini! Another option is to peel the fruit and separate the segments. Place the segments on a parchment paper-lined rimmed baking sheet, and freeze them for about 2 hours until they're firm. Then transfer the segments to a zipper bag and store them in the freezer. This method prevents the segments from clumping together. The frosty segments are waiting for me to snack on anytime I please. Frozen zest, segments, and juice will keep in the freezer for up to six months.

Follow my lead and satsuma season will last in your kitchen well after its fleeting time has passed, leaving you with the eternal sunshine of satsumas at your fingertips. I find comfort in knowing I can re-create those early mornings—the giving tree with its plump little orbs and the hot chicory coffee we enjoyed together—as they live in my memory forever.

A Family Affair

The lovely satsumas within this issue were generously provided by Southern Orchards in Mobile, Alabama. More than a decade ago, Chad Thornburg planted the first satsuma tree on his grandparents' west Mobile property. Today, Chad and his wife, Jenny, manage their orchard, which boasts nearly 400 trees. During satsuma season, from the beginning of November until the weekend before Christmas, they welcome the public to come and pick their own satsumas. Even if you're not in the area, you can still savor their freshly picked citrus fruit delivered to your doorstep. Find them online at *southernorchardsalabama.com* or in person at 11000 Calvert Rd., Mobile, Alabama.

See more photos of Southern Orchards and learn more about satsumas at *bakefromscratch.com/satsuma*.

FESTIVE FILLED BUNS

Elevate your seasonal celebrations with our luxuriously rich holiday buns

Panettone Buns, page 31

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANIE WELBOURNE STEELE
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY OLA AGBODZA
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY SIDNEY BRAGIEL

Chocolate-Cherry Brioche Buns, page 31

CHOCOLATE-CHERRY BRIOCHE BUNS

Makes 20 buns

These buns procure their magical power from Tangzhong, a paste or roux made from milk and flour. It has two essential purposes: lock in moisture while keeping your buns light and bouncy and keep them fresher longer. With decadent chocolate and tart cherries folded into soft, buttery-rich brioche, these buns are both elegant and comforting.

- **2⅔ cups (333 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting**
- **3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar**
- **1 (0.25-ounce) package (7 grams) instant yeast***
- **2¼ teaspoons (6.75 grams) kosher salt**
- **½ cup (120 grams) warm whole milk (120°F/49°C to 130°F/54°C)**
- **3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature and divided**
- **Tangzhong (recipe follows)**
- **½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and room temperature**
- **½ cup (85 grams) coarsely chopped bittersweet chocolate**
- **½ cup (64 grams) finely chopped dried cherries**
- **1 tablespoon (15 grams) water**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together 1⅔ cups (208 grams) flour, sugar, yeast, and salt. Add warm milk, 2 eggs (100 grams), and Tangzhong; using the paddle attachment, beat at low speed until combined, about 1 minute. With mixer on low speed, gradually add remaining 1 cup (125 grams) flour, beating until a shaggy dough forms; scrape sides of bowl.
2. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at medium-low speed until dough becomes smooth, elastic, and slightly tacky, 8 to 11 minutes. (Dough should pull away from sides of bowl.) With mixer on medium-low speed, add butter, 1 tablespoon (14 grams) at a time, beating until combined after each addition (7 to 8 minutes total). Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until a smooth, elastic dough forms, about 10 minutes. Reduce mixer speed to low; add chocolate and cherries, beating until well combined.
3. Lightly oil a large bowl. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 1 to 1½ hours.
4. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and punch down dough. Press dough into a 10x8-inch rectangle. Divide dough into 20 portions (about 45 grams each). Using your hands, gently roll each portion into a smooth ball, lightly flouring your hands as needed. Place 3 to 4 inches apart on prepared pans. Cover with lightly greased plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, about 1 hour.
6. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
7. In a small bowl, whisk together 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water and remaining 1 egg (50 grams); brush onto dough.
8. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted near center registers 190°F (88°C), 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Platinum® Yeast from Red Star®.*

TANGZHONG

Makes about ⅓ cup

- **6 tablespoons (90 grams) whole milk**
- **3 tablespoons (24 grams) all-purpose flour**

1. In a small saucepan, whisk together milk and flour; cook over medium-low heat, whisking constantly, until thickened, whisk leaves lines on bottom of pan, and an instant-read thermometer registers 150°F (66°C). (Mixture will look like mashed potatoes.) Transfer to a small bowl, and let cool until an instant-read thermometer registers 130°F (54°C) or until room temperature.

*pro tip

Keep your instant-read thermometer on hand because things move quickly once the mixture begins to thicken. If the Tangzhong overcooks, it will lose its elasticity and moisture you want in the buns.

PANETTONE BUNS

Makes 12 buns

These mini versions of classic Italian panettone are bursting with citrusy flavor and packed with chewy dried fruit. Soaking the fruit in aromatic orange liqueur plumps and softens it, which also improves the bread's texture. Anise seeds add a distinctive sweet and slightly licorice-like flavor profile, enhancing the buns' complexity and depth. Their charming individual size adds a festive touch to your holiday bread basket.

- **⅔ cup (160 grams) lukewarm water (85°F/29°C to 90°F/32°C), divided**
- **1 (0.25-ounce) package (7 grams) instant yeast***
- **3 to 3¼ cups (375 to 406 grams) all-purpose flour, divided, plus more for dusting**
- **¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
- **2¾ teaspoons (8.25 grams) kosher salt**
- **½ teaspoon ground anise seeds**
- **3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature and divided**
- **⅓ cup (80 grams) lukewarm whole milk (85°F/29°C to 90°F/32°C)**

2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
1½ teaspoons (10 grams) tightly packed orange zest
⅓ cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and room temperature
½ cup (80 grams) golden raisins
½ cup (80 grams) diced candied orange peel
½ cup (120 grams) orange liqueur
¼ cup (40 grams) chopped dried cranberries
¼ cup (40 grams) chopped dried cherries
2 teaspoons (8 grams) Swedish pearl sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together ⅓ cup (80 grams) lukewarm water and yeast until dissolved. Add 1 cup (125 grams) flour; using the paddle attachment, beat at low speed until a stiff dough forms. (If flour is not incorporated, knead dough in bowl by hand until it is combined.) Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 15 to 20 minutes.
2. Add 2 cups (250 grams) flour, granulated sugar, salt, and anise seed to yeast mixture. Add 2 eggs (100 grams), lukewarm milk, vanilla, and orange zest. Beat at low speed until a shaggy dough forms; scrape sides of bowl.
3. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at low speed until dough is tacky, soft, smooth, and elastic, 6 to 8 minutes; add up to remaining ¼ cup (31 grams) flour, 1 tablespoon (8 grams) at a time, if dough is too sticky. Add butter, 1 tablespoon (14 grams) at a time, beating until combined after each addition (3 to 4 minutes total). Beat until a soft, smooth, and elastic dough forms, 5 to 7 minutes. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and shape into a smooth ball.
4. Lightly oil a large bowl. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
5. In a medium bowl, stir together raisins, candied orange, liqueur, cranberries, cherries, and remaining ⅓ cup (80 grams) lukewarm water. Cover and let stand overnight.
6. Lightly spray 2 (6-well) popover pans with baking spray with flour. Line wells with tulip-style paper baking cups. (See Note.)
7. Drain fruit mixture; pat dry with paper towels.
8. On a heavily floured surface, roll dough into a ½-inch-thick oval (about 12x10 inches). Sprinkle half of fruit mixture onto dough. Using a rolling pin, press fruit into dough. Fold dough in half lengthwise. Rotate dough 90 degrees. (Wipe off any liquid from fruit, and re-flour rolling pin if needed.) Roll dough into a ½-inch-thick oval. Sprinkle with remaining fruit. Press fruit into dough; fold dough in half lengthwise. Rotate dough 90 degrees, and roll into a ½-inch-thick oval. Divide dough into 12 portions (about 93 grams each). Using your hands, gently roll each portion into a smooth ball, lightly flouring your hands as needed. Place dough in prepared wells. Cover with lightly greased plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, about 1½ hours.
9. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
10. In a small bowl, whisk remaining 1 egg (50 grams). Brush onto dough; sprinkle with pearl sugar.
11. Bake for 5 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F (180°C), and bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (88°C), 10 to 12 minutes more. Let cool in pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire racks. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Platinum® Yeast from Red Star®.*

Note: *The narrow, tall cups of a popover pan and the extended tips of tulip-style paper baking cups enable a high rise to the buns, mimicking the traditional look of a large panettone baked in a cylindrical paper mold. But don't fret if you don't have this equipment! Regular muffins pans can be used instead of popover pans and liners. Divide dough into 18 portions (about 61 grams each), and place each in a lightly greased muffin cup. Let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, about 1 hour. Bake as directed.*

Head to *bakefromscratch.com/shop* for Swedish pearl sugar.

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my SPECIAL *holiday* TREATS

Indulge in some of my favorite holiday recipes, including three from my new cookbook, as my festive and delicious gifts and wishes to you all for a happy holiday season

Cranberry Bars with Orange Shortbread Crust, page 35

PHOTOGRAPHY, RECIPE DEVELOPMENT, AND STYLING BY
BRITNEY BROWN CHAMBERLAIN

Fig, Prosciutto, Rosemary, and Olive Focaccia, page 35

bake until golden brown

Britney BREAKS BREAD
BRITNEY BROWN-CHAMBERLAIN

***Bake from Scratch* 2024 contributing editor Britney Brown-Chamberlain is releasing her debut cookbook, *Bake Until Golden Brown*, this fall!**

It's filled with more than 100 of her sweet and savory heirloom recipes, modern twists on classic desserts, and more. **Order now in time for holiday delivery at *hoffmanmediastore.com*.**

Find Britney on Instagram at @britneybreaksbread and her website, *britneybreaksbread.com*.

CRANBERRY BARS WITH ORANGE SHORTBREAD CRUST

Makes 18 bars

These bars are the perfect choice for those seeking a memorable dessert! The buttery, citrusy shortbread crust is topped with a bold layer of cranberry compote. To finish, a billowy meringue complements the rich flavor of the bars with a touch of sweetness.

Crust:

- 1¾ cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) orange zest
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and room temperature

Cranberry curd:

- 2 pounds (910 grams) fresh cranberries
- 2 cups (400 grams) granulated sugar
- 5 large egg yolks (95 grams), room temperature
- 2 tablespoons (16 grams) cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter

Meringue:

- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) fresh lemon juice
- 2 large egg whites (60 grams), room temperature
- 3 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a 9-inch square baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. For the crust: In a large bowl, stir together flour, sugar, orange zest, and salt. Using your hands, cut butter into flour mixture until mixture is crumbly. Press into bottom of prepared pan.
3. Bake until golden and puffy, 15 to 18 minutes. Let cool completely.
4. For the cranberry curd: In a medium saucepan, combine cranberries and sugar. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until mixture comes to a boil and cranberries begin to burst, 10 to 15 minutes.
5. In the work bowl of a food processor, process egg yolks until combined. With food processor running, carefully pour hot cranberry mixture through food chute, processing until smooth. Return mixture to saucepan.
6. In a small bowl, stir together cornstarch and 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water. Pour cornstarch slurry and cinnamon into cranberry mixture, and stir until well combined. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until mixture thickens and cornstarch flavor is cooked out, about 5 minutes. Stir in butter, and remove from heat. Pour cranberry mixture on top of prepared crust, and smooth with an offset spatula. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of curd to prevent a film from forming. Let cool at room temperature for 1 hour; refrigerate until fully set, at least 4 hours. Slice into 18 (3x1½-inch) rectangles.
7. For the meringue: In the bowl of a stand mixer, place lemon juice. Using a paper towel, wipe down sides and bottom of bowl with lemon juice until nothing remains. (This will help remove any oils and excess moisture from the bowl.) Let dry.
8. In the top of a double boiler, whisk together egg whites and sugar. Cook over simmering water, stirring occasionally, until sugar fully dissolves and an instant-read thermometer registers 150°F (66°C), 5 to 7 minutes. (Sugar is dissolved when you can rub the mixture between your fingers and feel no sugar.)
9. In the cleaned bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, carefully place egg mixture. Beat on low speed until bubbly. Add cream of tartar, and beat on medium speed until glossy, stiff peaks form, 5 to 7 minutes. Spoon meringue into a pastry bag fitted with your favorite piping tip, and pipe on top of cranberry bars. Using kitchen torch, carefully brown meringue.

FIG, PROSCIUTTO, ROSEMARY, AND OLIVE FOCACCIA

Makes 1 (13x9-inch) loaf

This recipe was inspired by my travels to Portofino, Italy, with Bake from Scratch *magazine when I was about seven months pregnant. Me and my big bump ate everything in sight, but my favorite thing was focaccia. This artisanal bread boasts a stunning texture, generously studded with plump figs, briny olives, fragrant rosemary, and thinly sliced prosciutto. Every time I make this, it takes me right back to that place.*

Dough:

- 3 cups (720 grams) warm water (105°F/41°C to 110°F/43°C)
- 1 tablespoon (9 grams) active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) granulated sugar
- 6¼ cups (794 grams) bread flour
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) olive oil, plus more for oiling pan and hands
- 4 teaspoons (12 grams) kosher salt

Topping:

- 8 fresh figs (80 grams), cut into quarters
- 4 slices prosciutto (50 grams), cut into 1-inch squares
- 4 sprigs fresh rosemary
- ¼ cup (55 grams) sliced black olives
- 1 to 2 tablespoons (14 to 28 grams) olive oil
- Flaked sea salt, to taste

1. For the dough: In a large bowl, whisk together 3 cups (720 grams) warm water, yeast, and sugar. Let stand until bloomed and foaming, 5 to 10 minutes.
2. Add flour, oil, and kosher salt to yeast mixture. Using your hands, mix together until fully combined and a dough forms. Cover, and let rest until dough is very bubbly and risen, about 1 hour.
3. Slightly punch down dough. Stretch one side of dough upward and fold over to opposite side of dough; rotate bowl. Repeat stretching and folding process 3 times, rotating bowl after each fold. Cover dough, and let rest for 30 minutes. Repeat folding process 2 more times, letting rest between each set of folds. After the final fold, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 4 hours.
4. Punch down dough. Stretch and fold 4 times, rotating bowl between each fold. Cover and refrigerate dough to cold-ferment for at least 8 hours or up to overnight. (See Note.)
5. Before you're ready to bake, press dough into a well-oiled 13x9-inch rimmed baking sheet. Cover and let rest at room temperature for 2 hours.
6. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
7. For the topping: In a large bowl, combine figs, prosciutto, rosemary, and olives. Drizzle with 1 to 2 tablespoons (14 to 28 grams) oil, and toss to coat. (This will prevent toppings from burning in the oven.)
8. Cover your hands in oil, and press your fingertips into dough to create dimples

or indentations at 1-inch intervals. Place topping on dough. Sprinkle with sea salt.
9. Bake until golden brown, 35 to 40 minutes.

Note: *Cold-fermenting dough involves allowing the dough to rise slowly in the refrigerator instead of at room temperature. This extended fermentation period enhances the flavor and texture of the bread, resulting in a more complex taste and lighter crumb.*

SWEET POTATO-CARROT CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

For more than two years, I have been waiting for a special moment to share this recipe. What's more special than my first cookbook? The sweet potatoes give this cake an incredibly moist texture, offering a rich depth of flavor that's balanced by a velvety cream cheese frosting. Each bite is a comforting blend of warm spices and sweet, creamy goodness!

Cake:

- 1 pound (455 grams) sweet potatoes
- 2¾ cups (344 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup (112 grams) vegetable oil
- 4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- 2½ cups (325 grams) shredded carrot

Frosting:

- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 12 ounces (340 grams) cream cheese, room temperature
- 5 cups (600 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1 tablespoon (10 grams) meringue powder
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- Pinch kosher salt

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. For the cake: Rinse and dry sweet potatoes. Place on prepared pan.
3. Bake until soft and easily pierced with a fork, 30 to 45 minutes. Let cool enough to handle.
4. Remove skin, and place potato flesh in a large bowl. Let cool completely, 1 to 2 hours. Mash potatoes.
5. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray 3 (8-inch) round cake pans with baking spray with flour.
6. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, salt, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, and allspice.
7. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, granulated sugar, brown sugar, and oil on medium speed until well combined and smooth, about 5 minutes. Scrape down sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, ensuring each egg is fully incorporated prior to adding the next, 20 to 30 seconds each. Scrape down sides of bowl. Add mashed sweet potato and vanilla extract, beating until combined, 30 seconds to 1 minute. (The batter may break but will come back together soon.) Add flour mixture, and continue to beat until combined and smooth, about 1 minute. Scrape down sides of bowl. Continue to beat for 10 to 15 seconds. Fold in carrots. Divide batter among prepared pans.
8. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
9. For the frosting: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter on medium speed until fluffy and lighter in color, about 2 minutes. Add cream cheese, and continue to beat until fluffy and combined, about 2 minutes. Add confectioners' sugar, meringue powder, vanilla extract, and salt, and continue to beat until combined and smooth, 2 to 3 minutes. Scrape down sides of bowl. Continue to beat for 30 seconds to 1 minute.
10. Place 1 cooled cake layer on a cake stand. Dollop with a generous amount of frosting, and spread evenly. Repeat with remaining 2 cake layers and frosting, and stack layers. Spread remaining frosting on top and sides of cake.

PEPPERMINT BARK CREAM PUFFS

Makes about 20 cream puffs

Nothing screams the holidays like peppermint bark, and let's be clear, cream puffs are simply delicious and so much fun to make. This recipe features cream puffs stuffed with chocolate ganache, a peppermint whipped cream, topped with chopped peppermint bark, and more chocolate ganache to finish. It's such a fun recipe!

Cream puffs:

- ¾ cup (180 grams) whole milk
- ½ cup (113 grams) salted butter
- ¼ cup (60 grams) water
- 1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
- Pinch kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 3 large eggs (150 grams)

Peppermint whipped cream:

- 2½ cups (600 grams) cold heavy whipping cream
- ⅔ cup (80 grams) confectioners' sugar
- ¾ teaspoon (3 grams) peppermint extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

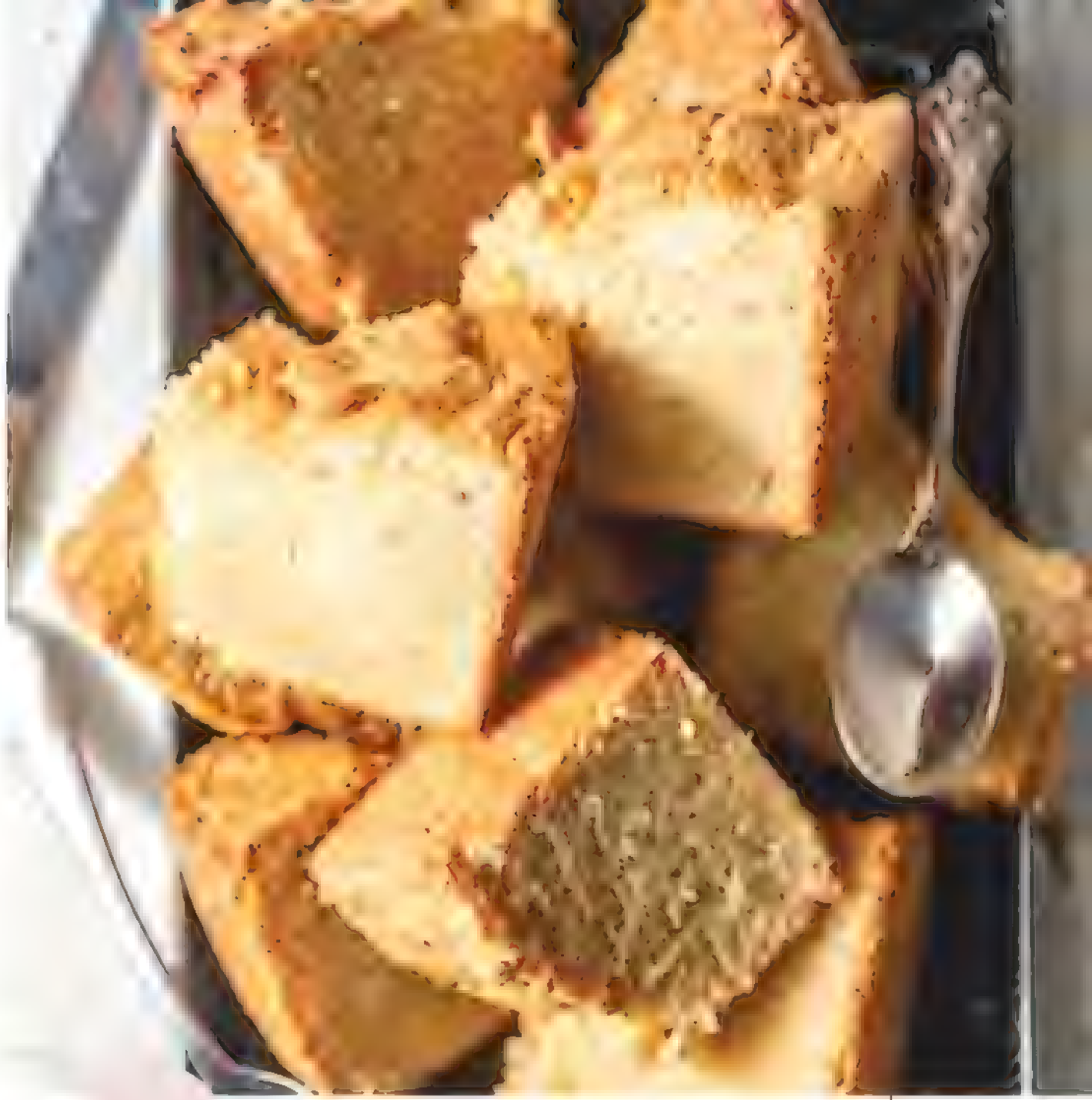
Ganache:

- ⅔ cup (158 grams) heavy whipping cream
- 7 ounces (198 grams) dark chocolate, chopped

Peppermint bark*, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. For cream puffs: In a medium saucepan, heat milk, butter, and ¼ cup (60 grams) water over medium heat until butter is melted. Add flour and sugar, and whisk until a thick paste begins to form. Use a flat spatula or wooden spoon to stir mixture until it begins to look like mashed potatoes. Continue to cook, stirring constantly, until a skin forms on the bottom of the pan, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Transfer mixture to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. With mixer on medium-low speed, beat until dough is warm to the touch, 1 to 2 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until combined after each addition for about 30 seconds. (Mixture may look broken but will come back together.) Beat in vanilla.
4. Transfer batter to large pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch round piping tip (Wilton 1A/Ateco #806). Pipe batter into 2-inch rounds about 2 inches apart onto prepared pan.
5. Bake for 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F (180°C), and bake until the tops of the puffs are golden brown, about 15 minutes.
6. Using a wooden pick, poke a hole in the center of each puff. Allow the puffs to cool completely.
7. For peppermint whipped cream: Add all ingredients to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Beat on medium speed until stiff peaks form, 2 to 4 minutes. Refrigerate until ready to use.
8. For ganache: Add cream to a medium microwave-safe bowl, and heat on high until steaming, about 1 minute. Add chocolate; let it stand for 1 minute and then whisk until the chocolate is completely melted and combined with the cream. (Heat mixture on low if chocolate does not fully melt.)
9. Finely chop the peppermint bark or break it into small pieces.
10. Transfer whipped cream to large pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch piping tip of your choice. Gently cut the tops off the cream puffs, and fill each with 1 tablespoon (12 grams) ganache. Sprinkle with peppermint bark. Then pipe peppermint whipped cream on top. Place the top of the cream puffs on top.
11. Add a drizzle of chocolate ganache on top, and sprinkle with more chopped peppermint bark. Best served same day as assembled. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

**I used Williams Sonoma Peppermint Bark.*



plus more! Get my **Brown Butter Kentucky Butter Cake** recipe at *bakefromscratch.com*.

CANELÉS

Originally known as *cannelé Bordelaise*, *canelés* (pronounced "can-uh-LAY") are a unique pastry rooted in the winemaking region of Bordeaux in southern France. In the late 18th century, winemakers used egg whites to clarify their wines, resulting in a surplus of egg yolks. Historical accounts attribute the creation of canelés to resourceful nuns in the region, who cleverly crafted these pastries with leftover yolks, blending them with flour, milk, and sugar. Since Bordeaux is a port city, the recipe naturally evolved to include rum and vanilla, which beautifully enhances their flavor profile. Baked in small fluted copper molds, these pastries developed a distinctive slightly chewy caramelized crust and a soft, custard-like interior. The name "canelé" comes from the French word for "fluted," which describes the shape of the molds in which they're baked.

Making canelés is often considered a bit challenging, but fear not! With our reliable recipe, you can confidently master the art of creating these irresistible pastries. If you have a love for baking and appreciate the beauty of simple, elegant pastries, this recipe is perfect for you.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANIE WELBOURNE STEELE
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY AMANDA STAB LE
FOOD STYLING BY AARON CONRAD
AND KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STY. NG BY MAGGIE RATLIFF

Tool Tête-a-Tête

Here are a few standout tools to help you make perfect canelés

While fluted molds add an elegant touch to your canelés, the distinctive texture of the caramelized crust and soft, custardy interior that define canelés is directly influenced by the heat conductivity of **copper molds**. You'll find molds made of stainless steel, aluminum, and even sicilone, but purists insist that investing in copper molds is essential for mastering this classic French treat—and we couldn't agree more.

A **rimmed baking sheet** and a **wire rack** make seasoning and coating the molds with beeswax and butter a breeze. The wire rack lets air circulate around the molds, and cooling them upside down ensures excess drips away, leaving you with a perfectly thin coating on your molds.

Pouring the rested canelé batter into the small copper molds becomes effortless with a **spouted measuring cup**. This simple tool eliminates messy spills, ensuring that every drop of batter goes precisely where it should—into the canelé molds and nowhere else.

CANELÉS

Makes 6 canelés

Plan ahead for when you want enjoy your canelés—it's a two- to three-day process since the batter needs to rest a minimum of 48 hours in the refrigerator. It's also best to savor canelés the day they're made, as their outer shell gradually softens over time.

- **1 cup (240 grams) whole milk**
- **1 teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste**
- **½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
- **2 large egg yolks (37 grams), room temperature**
- **2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly**
- **¼ teaspoon kosher salt**
- **½ cup (63 grams) all-purpose flour**
- **2 tablespoons (30 grams) dark rum**
- **¼ cup (57 grams) clarified unsalted butter (see Notes)**
- **¼ cup (35 grams) beeswax pellets (see Notes)**

1. In a small saucepan, heat milk and vanilla bean paste over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, just until bubbles form around sides of pan. (Do not boil.)
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together sugar, egg yolks, melted butter, and salt. Gradually add half of hot milk mixture, whisking constantly. Whisk in flour until smooth; whisk in remaining hot milk mixture. Whisk in rum. Strain batter through a fine-mesh sieve into an airtight container. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of batter to prevent a skin from forming. Cover with lid, and refrigerate for at least 48 hours or up to 4 days.
3. Preheat oven to 450°F (230°C). Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil. Place a wire rack on another rimmed baking sheet. On foil-lined pan, place seasoned canelé molds, and preheat in oven for 5 to 10 minutes. Leave oven on.
4. In a microwave-safe liquid-measuring cup, heat clarified butter and beeswax on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until completely melted and combined.
5. Wearing heatproof gloves or using a cloth to protect your hands, fill 1 hot canelé mold halfway with beeswax mixture; swirl and coat entire inside, and pour excess mixture back into bowl. Place mold, upside down, on prepared rack, letting excess beeswax mixture drip from mold for 30 seconds to 1 minute. Repeat with remaining molds. Repeat procedure one more time with all molds. Let beeswax mixture harden at room temperature, or refrigerate for 10 to 15 minutes to speed up the process.
6. Gently stir batter with a spoon or silicone spatula to emulsify. (Do not whisk; you do not want to introduce more air.) On foil-lined prepared pan, divide batter among canelé molds, leaving about ⅜ inch of space at top to allow for rising. (In molds we used, it's about ¼ cup or 75 grams per mold.)
7. Bake for 20 minutes. Rotate pan, and reduce oven temperature to 350°F (180°C). Bake until top and outside of canelés are deep golden brown, 45 to 55 minutes, rotating pan again after 20 minutes of baking. Carefully remove 1 canelé from mold; if it does not have a uniform color, return it to mold, and bake for 5 to 10 minutes more. Immediately invert canelés onto a wire rack, and let cool completely. Best served same day as made.

Notes: *Clarified butter is available in most well-stocked grocery stores, or you can make it yourself. To make it, melt 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter in a small saucepan over low heat. Remove from heat, and let it stand for 3 to 4 minutes to settle. Using a small spoon, carefully remove white foam from the surface. Gently pour off the clear yellow liquid into a heatproof glass jar, leaving the white solids in the bottom of the pan. Let cool, seal, and refrigerate for up to 2 months.*

Beeswax pellets can be found at specialty cooking stores, health food stores, and online. Be sure you are buying food-safe beeswax.

Seasoning New Copper Molds and Coating Before Baking

If your copper canelé molds are new, it's essential to season them before baking with them. First, preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C). Next, wash your molds in warm, soapy water. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil, and top it with a wire rack. Place your clean molds on another foil-lined rimmed baking sheet. In a microwave-safe liquid-measuring cup, heat ¼ cup (57 grams) clarified unsalted butter and ¼ cup (35 grams) beeswax pellets in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until mixture is fluid and combined. Fill one mold to the top with the butter and beeswax mixture and then immediately pour it back into the measuring cup; return the mold to the baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining molds. Bake for 10 minutes. After baking, pour any excess beeswax mixture into the original measuring cup. Invert the molds onto the wire rack, and let them cool completely. Repeat the filling, baking, and draining process three more times to season the molds thoroughly. After you've seasoned the molds, avoid washing them; instead, wipe them clean as needed to maintain their seasoned surface.

The copper molds do not need a full seasoning process before each bake, but they do need a coating process as part of each bake for the canelés to achieve their signature dark, glossy sheen. A paper-thin layer of the same clarified butter and beeswax mixture enhances the exterior caramelization and texture of the canelés during baking.

Give It a Rest

After mixing your ingredients but before filling your molds and baking your canelés, it's important to let the batter rest for at least 48 hours. This resting period allows the flour to properly hydrate and the gluten to develop, which is essential for maintaining the shape of the canelés as they rise during baking. Additionally, the longer the batter rests, the more pronounced the flavors of rum and vanilla are in the finished canelés.

Weigh Your Batter

For more-consistent results when making canelés, use a kitchen scale to measure the batter instead of estimating. By weighing the batter, you ensure each mold gets the right amount of batter and you have more control over the process, leading to consistently delicious results every time you bake.

Troubleshooting White Bottoms

If your canelé has a "white bottom," like the one on the right shown above, don't worry! Here are some tips to help you prevent this and bake perfect canelés every time.

Make sure the butter-beeswax mixture in the bottom of your copper molds is a thin, even layer. A thick layer can prevent proper caramelization. Be careful not to mix too much air into the batter, which can cause the canelés to rise too much; they should puff slightly but not rise high. Additionally, avoid overfilling the molds, and make sure you bake them for long enough. These tips will help you achieve a beautifully caramelized exterior with a soft interior.

Satsumas

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER AND
STEPHANIE WELBOURNE STEELE
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY OLA AGBODZA
FOOD STYLING BY AARON CONRAD
STYLING BY MAGGIE RATLIFF

Take full advantage of this small but standout winter citrus with these diverse and decadent recipes

Satsuma-Almond Cake, page 56

SATSUMA CREAM TART

Makes 1 (13½x4¼-inch) tart

Inspired by our love of the nostalgic Orange Creamsicle ice pop, this tart offers a sophisticated take on a beloved childhood treat. The silky-smooth filling is nestled within a crisp, indulgent chocolaty shell, creating a decadent combination of flavors and textures that captivate with each bite.

Crust:

- 2 cups (224 grams) chocolate sandwich cookie crumbs (see Note)
- 3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)

Filling:

- ¾ cup (225 grams) Satsuma Marmalade (recipe follows)
- ¾ cup (232 grams) sweetened condensed milk
- 2 tablespoons (6 grams) satsuma zest
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) fresh satsuma juice
- 3 large egg yolks (56 grams), room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt

Sweetened whipped cream, to serve

Garnish: Candied Satsuma Peels (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray a 13½x4¼-inch fluted removable-bottom tart pan with baking spray with flour.
2. For crust: In a medium bowl, stir together cookie crumbs, sugar, and salt.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together melted butter and egg yolk. Stir butter mixture into cookie crumb mixture until well combined. Press mixture into bottom and up sides of prepared pan.
4. Bake until fragrant, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool for 30 minutes. Leave oven on.
5. For filling: Using a small offset spatula, spread Satsuma Marmalade in bottom of cooled prepared crust; freeze until cold, 10 to 15 minutes.
6. In a large bowl, whisk together condensed milk, satsuma zest and juice, egg yolks, vanilla, and salt until well combined. Spread onto marmalade in prepared crust. Using a wooden pick, pop any air bubbles on surface.
7. Bake until fragrant and edges of crust look dry, edges of filling are set, and center jiggles slightly, 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack. Loosely cover and refrigerate until cold, at least 4 hours, or up to overnight.
8. Just before serving, remove from pan, and top with whipped cream. Garnish with Candied Satsuma Peels, if desired.

Note: *Separate 25 cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies into 50 individual cookies; scrape off and discard cream filling. Crush the individual cookies into crumbs.*

Satsuma Marmalade

Makes 2⅓ cups

- 9 medium satsumas (840 grams)
- 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons (5 grams) lemon zest
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon (75 grams) fresh lemon juice
- 1½ cups (300 grams) granulated sugar
- ¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt

1. Peel and seed satsumas, reserving peels. In the work bowl of a food processor, process satsuma flesh and peels and lemon zest and juice until almost smooth, about 1 minute. (There should still be some small pieces remaining.)
2. In a medium saucepan, bring satsuma mixture to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to low, and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in sugar and salt, and increase heat to medium-high; cook, stirring frequently, until mixture is thickened and an instant-read thermometer registers 210°F (98°C), 35 to 40 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool completely. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

Candied Satsuma Peels

Makes about 1 cup

- 6 satsumas (339 grams)
- 3 cups (720 grams) cold water, divided
- 1¾ cups (350 grams) granulated sugar, divided

1. Preheat oven to 250°F (130°C). Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper; top with an ovenproof wire rack.
2. Peel satsumas, keeping peels in large pieces. Cut peels into 2x1/16-inch strips. Reserve satsuma flesh for another use.
3. In a large skillet, bring satsuma peel strips and 2 cups (480 grams) cold water to a low boil over medium heat. Reduce heat, and simmer, without stirring, for 10 minutes; drain.
4. Return satsuma peels to skillet; sprinkle 1 cup (200 grams) sugar onto peels. Pour remaining 1 cup (240 grams) cold water onto sugar; gently stir until combined. Bring to a boil over medium-low heat; reduce heat, and simmer for 15 minutes. Using a slotted spoon or tongs, carefully remove satsuma peels, and arrange in a single layer on prepared rack.
5. Bake for 30 minutes.
6. In a shallow dish, place remaining ¾ cup (150 grams) sugar. Dredge satsuma peels in sugar to fully coat. Return to rack; let stand until dry, at least 2 hours. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

SATSUMA-PISTACHIO FINANCIERS

Makes 12 cakes

The exquisitely refined financier originated in 19th-century France, where a pastry chef near the Paris stock exchange introduced small, rectangular-shaped cakes as a convenient treat for busy financiers and bankers. The name "financier" was inspired by its resemblance to a gold bar, symbolizing wealth and prestige. This elegantly fluted version of the financier elevates this classic pastry. Each golden-brown, buttery bite offers a heavenly blend of crunchy pistachios and is enriched with the divine flavor of Satsuma Marmalade. This combination of flavors and textures effortlessly blends classic elegance with a modern touch, ensuring every bite is a moment of pure indulgence.

- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (141 grams) unsalted butter
- ½ cup (150 grams) Satsuma Marmalade (recipe on page 50)
- ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- 1½ cups (144 grams) blanched almond flour
- ½ cup (63 grams) all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 3 large egg whites (90 grams), room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ½ cup (57 grams) finely chopped toasted unsalted pistachios

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Spray 12 (3-inch) brioche à tête molds with baking spray with flour (see Note). Place molds on a baking sheet.
2. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Cook until butter turns a medium-brown color and has a nutty aroma, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and carefully pour browned butter into a medium bowl; stir in Satsuma Marmalade. Let cool slightly.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together sugar, flours, and salt. Add egg whites and vanilla, whisking until smooth. Slowly whisk in butter mixture just until combined. Transfer batter to a large pastry bag, and cut a ½-inch opening in tip. Pipe batter into prepared molds, filling about three-fourths full (about 56 grams each). Sprinkle with pistachios. Place in oven.
4. Immediately reduce oven temperature to 375°F (190°C). Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 18 to 20 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking and covering with foil after 10 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. Let cool completely in molds on a wire rack. Best served same day as made. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Note: *Batter can also be baked in a 12-cup muffin pan.*

SATSUMA-CHERRY KRINGLE

Makes 2 (12x10-inch) kringles

The kringle, a cherished Danish pastry, was introduced in the 17th century by Austrian bakers influenced by the Austrian Habsburgs. "Kringle" stems from the Old Norse word "kran," meaning "circle or ring," which describes its twisted or oval shape, reminiscent of pretzels. This unique combination of bright satsuma, tart cherries, and nutty marzipan is a delightful winter twist marrying tradition with seasonal flavor.

⅓ cup (80 grams) plus 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water, divided
6 tablespoons (72 grams) granulated sugar, divided
1 (0.25-ounce) package (7 grams) active dry yeast*
4½ cups (572 grams) bread flour
3½ teaspoons (10.5 grams) kosher salt
1⅓ cups (303 grams) unsalted European-style butter, cubed and frozen until firm
1 cup (240 grams) cold whole milk
All-purpose flour, for dusting
1 large egg (50 grams)
1 cup (300 grams) Satsuma Marmalade (recipe on page 50)
2 to 3 tablespoons (44 to 66 grams) cherry preserves*
1 cup (360 grams) Marzipan (recipe follows), divided
Sliced almonds, for sprinkling
Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. In a small microwave-safe bowl, stir together ⅓ cup (80 grams) water and ½ teaspoon (2 grams) granulated sugar; heat on high in 10-second intervals until an instant-read thermometer registers 110°F (43°C) to 115°F (46°C). Whisk in yeast until dissolved. Let stand until foamy, 5 to 10 minutes.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat bread flour, salt, and remaining 5 tablespoons plus 2½ teaspoons (70 grams) granulated sugar at low speed until combined. Add ⅓ cup (76 grams) frozen butter; beat until mixture resembles coarse bread crumbs, about 3 minutes. Add remaining 1 cup (227 grams) frozen butter; pulse mixer between low speed and "off" setting just until butter is coated with flour.
3. Add cold milk to yeast mixture; while pulsing mixer between low speed and "off" setting, add yeast mixture to flour mixture in a slow, steady stream just until a shaggy dough comes together. (There will still be large pieces of butter.) If any flour mixture remains at bottom of bowl, gently knead by hand to incorporate.
4. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour; turn out dough onto prepared surface, and shape into a rough 7-inch square. (Dough will be soft and slightly sticky.) Wrap in plastic wrap, and freeze for 30 minutes.
5. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour. Roll dough into an 18x9-inch rectangle, lightly dusting surface and top of dough with all-purpose flour as needed. Fold dough in half so short sides meet. Pat fold to mark center. Unfold dough, and pull one short side to center. Pull opposite side to center so short sides are touching. Pinch seams together; fold along center seam, like closing a book. (This is called a book-fold.) Rotate dough 90 degrees; repeat rolling and folding procedure once. (Dough will start out soft, rough, and somewhat sticky but will come together; turn dough over as needed so edges are rolled out as evenly as possible.) Wrap in plastic wrap, and freeze for 15 minutes.
6. Repeat rotating, rolling, and folding procedure once. (This will make a total of 3 book-folds.) Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1½ hours or up to overnight.
7. Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
8. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water.
9. In another small bowl, stir together Satsuma Marmalade and preserves until well combined.
10. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour; on prepared surface, divide dough in half. Roll half of dough into a 26x9-inch rectangle. (Dough will be thin. If at any point the dough is hard to roll, cover with plastic wrap, and let stand for 5 minutes before rolling again.) (Keep remaining dough refrigerated until ready to use.) Gently mark dough in thirds crosswise to create 3 (3-inch) sections. Spread half of marmalade mixture (½ cup plus 1 tablespoon or 172 grams) down center third of rectangle, leaving a ¼-inch border at each short end. Crumble ½ cup (180 grams) Marzipan into small pieces all over marmalade mixture.
11. Fold one side of dough over filling. Brush remaining side and ends of dough with egg wash, and fold over filling and dough. Press firmly on all seams to seal. Make sure dough and filling are even, there are no air pockets, and it is still 26 inches long. Lift at both ends, and place on a prepared pan. Shape into an oval, making sure seam is at center of oval and not on outside edges. Press and pinch ends together to seal. Oval should be an even thickness and about 10 inches long and 8 inches wide. Using a fork dipped in flour, dock top of oval about every 1 inch. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed, about 30 minutes.
12. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
13. Brush egg mixture on top and sides of assembled kringle; sprinkle sliced almonds onto kringle. Repeat rolling, filling, and shaping procedure with remaining dough, remaining marmalade mixture, and remaining ½ cup (180 grams) Marzipan when first kringle goes in oven.
14. Bake until lightly browned, about 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F (180°C), and bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (88°C) to 200°F (93°C), 15 to 20 minutes more, covering with foil after 10 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. Let cool completely on pan on a wire rack.
15. Increase oven temperature to 400°F (200°C). Bake remaining kringle as directed. Just before serving, garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Red Star® Active Dry Yeast and Bonne Maman® Cherry Preserves.*

Marzipan

Makes 1¼ cups

2¼ cups (216 grams) blanched almond flour
1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar
1 large egg white (30 grams)
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
2 teaspoons (8 grams) almond extract

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour and confectioners' sugar until combined. Add egg white and extracts; process until mixture holds together when pinched. (If mixture is too dry, add water, 1 teaspoon [5 grams] at a time, processing after each addition.) Tightly wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for up to 1 month.

Search “kringle” on
bakefromscratch.com
for step-by-step
shaping instructions
and photos.

POMEGRANATE-SATSUMA SHORTCAKES

Makes 8 shortcakes

These elegant shortcakes are baked to golden perfection and filled with a light and creamy whipped ricotta. Achieving their distinctive layered appearance involves stacking the dough before cutting out the final shapes. Be sure to cover the shortcakes with foil halfway through baking to prevent them from getting overly browned.

- 1 cup (250 grams) peeled satsuma sections, chopped
- ¼ cup (56 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (27 grams) pomegranate arils, divided
- ¼ cup (75 grams) Satsuma Marmalade (recipe on page 50)

- **1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting**
- **1½ cups (188 grams) cake flour**
- **⅓ cup (38 grams) very finely chopped toasted pecans**
- **¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
- **1 tablespoon (15 grams) baking powder**
- **2 teaspoons (2 grams) satsuma zest**
- **1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
- **¾ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking soda**
- **½ cup (113 grams) cold unsalted butter, frozen for 10 minutes**
- **¾ cup (180 grams) cold whole buttermilk**
- **½ cup (120 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (30 grams) heavy whipping cream, divided**
- **2 tablespoons (24 grams) turbinado sugar**
- **Whipped Ricotta Cream (recipe follows)**

1. In a medium bowl, stir together chopped satsumas, 2 tablespoons (27 grams) pomegranate arils, and Satsuma Marmalade. Cover and refrigerate for up to 4 hours.
2. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together flours, pecans, granulated sugar, baking powder, satsuma zest, salt, baking soda, and remaining ¼ cup (56 grams) pomegranate arils. Grate frozen butter on large holes of a box grater into flour mixture; stir until butter is coated with flour mixture.
4. In a small bowl, stir together cold buttermilk and ½ cup (120 grams) cream. Using a fork, stir buttermilk mixture into flour mixture until a soft dough forms.
5. Lightly dust work surface with all-purpose flour; turn out dough onto prepared surface, and knead just until dough comes together, 2 to 3 times. Roll dough into a 7x6-inch rectangle. Cut dough into quarters; stack quarters on top of each other. Roll dough to 1- to 1¼-inch thickness. Repeat cutting, stacking, and rolling procedure two more times. Using a 2½-inch round cutter dipped in flour, cut dough, rerolling scraps once. Place on prepared pan. Freeze for 15 minutes.
6. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
7. Brush remaining 2 tablespoons (30 grams) cream onto dough; sprinkle with turbinado sugar.
8. Bake for 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 375°F (190°C), and bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 190°F (85°C), 10 to 15 minutes more, loosely covering with foil after 5 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
9. Halve cooled shortcakes; fill with satsuma mixture and Whipped Ricotta Cream. Serve immediately.

Whipped Ricotta Cream

Makes 1½ cups

- **½ cup (112 grams) whole-milk ricotta cheese***
- **¼ cup (30 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- **1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- **½ cup (120 grams) heavy whipping cream**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat ricotta, confectioners' sugar, and vanilla at low speed until well combined, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, add cream in a slow, steady stream. Increase mixer speed to high, and beat until stiff peaks form. Use immediately.

**We used BelGioioso® Ricotta con Latte® Cheese.*

SATSUMA-ALMOND CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

This luscious cake, inspired by Brian Hart Hoffman's love for satsumas, is a playful twist on our Sicilian Whole Orange Cake from our January/February 2023 issue. It's designed as a no-waste recipe, ingeniously utilizing every part of the satsuma, from its juice to its peel. The result? A moist and tender cake that captures the essence of winter citrus season.

- **3 satsumas (288 grams), unpeeled, cut into pieces, and seeded**
- **2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour**
- **1½ cups (144 grams) blanched almond flour***
- **2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder**
- **½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- **2¼ cups (450 grams) granulated sugar, divided**
- **4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature**
- **¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled**
- **1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract**
- **¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons (90 grams) fresh satsuma juice**
- **Garnish: sliced toasted almonds, Candied Satsuma Peels (recipe on page 50)**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. In the work bowl of a food processor, process chopped satsumas until almost puréed, about 30 seconds. (There should still be some small pieces remaining.)
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, baking powder, and salt.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat 2 cups (400 grams) sugar and eggs at medium-high speed until thick and pale, 5 to 7 minutes. With mixer on medium speed, add melted butter and vanilla, beating until combined. Add puréed satsuma, beating until fully combined. Add flour mixture, and beat at low speed just until combined, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl.
5. Spray a 10-cup Bundt pan with baking spray with flour. Pour batter into prepared pan.
6. Bake until top is golden brown and a wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean, about 1 hour, loosely covering with foil after 45 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes.
7. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, bring satsuma juice and remaining ¼ cup (50 grams) sugar to a boil over medium heat, whisking occasionally until sugar dissolves.
8. Invert cake onto a wire rack, and gently brush satsuma syrup all over cake. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Garnish with sliced almonds and Candied Satsuma Peels, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Bob's Red Mill® Super-Fine Blanched Almond Flour.*

Whether you want to be the hit of the cookie swap or simply enjoy a few sweet treats, this collection of festive cookies will help you ring in the season

12 DAYS OF *Holiday Cookies*

Peppermint-Chocolate Sandwich Cookies, page 69

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE CARPENTER AND STEPHANIE WELBOURNE STEELE / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY OLA AGBODZA AND AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY AARON CONRAD AND KATIE MOON DICKERSON / STYLING BY COURTNI BODIFORD AND MAGGIE RATLIFF

Sugar Cookie Wreaths, page 59

SUGAR COOKIE WREATHS

Makes 20 to 22 cookies

Combining the zesty freshness of lemon with the aromatic warmth of rosemary, these beauties are a delightful twist on traditional sugar cookies. Decorated with an elegant wreath pattern etched into the icing, they are the epitome of the Christmas season. Change up the colors of the Royal Icing to make these year-round for any holiday or season.

- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 3¼ cups (406 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- Royal Icing (recipe follows)
- Red pearl sprinkles

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together sugar, lemon zest, and rosemary by hand. Add butter; using the paddle attachment, beat at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and vanilla, beating until combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until a dough forms.
4. Divide dough in half. On a heavily floured surface, roll half of dough to ½-inch thickness. (Lightly flour top of dough if it sticks to rolling pin.) (Keep remaining dough covered with plastic wrap.) Using a 3-inch round fluted cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps and cutting to use all dough. Using a small offset spatula, place 1 inch apart on prepared pans.
5. Bake, one pan at a time, until lightly browned and tops look dry, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Using a large flat metal spatula, remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. Transfer colored Royal Icing to separate small pastry bags; cut a ⅛-inch opening in each tip.
7. Working with 1 cooled cookie at a time, dip cookie into reserved white Royal Icing, letting excess drip off. Place on a wire rack. Pipe green icing in alternating stripes to create a circle. (When the icing is the same consistency, it should melt together with the white icing.) Gently drag a wooden pick through center of colored icing to create a wreath design; immediately decorate with sprinkles as desired. Repeat with remaining cookies and icing. Let stand until icing is dry, at least 2 hours, or up to overnight. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

Royal Icing

Makes about 6 cups

- 7½ cups (900 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 5 tablespoons (45 grams) meringue powder
- ⅔ cup (160 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (30 grams) warm water
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- Dark and light green gel food coloring

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat confectioners' sugar and meringue powder at low speed until combined. Slowly add ⅔ cup (160 grams) warm water, vanilla, and salt, beating until fluid, about 1 minute. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until stiff, 4 to 5 minutes; add up to 2 tablespoons (30 grams) warm water, 1 teaspoon (5 grams) at a time, until icing is desired consistency.
2. In a medium bowl, reserve three-fourths of icing (about 4½ cups or 843 grams). Divide remaining icing between 2 small bowls; tint each with food coloring as desired. Store, covered, until ready to use.

MARBLED GINGER COOKIES

Makes about 12 cookies

The striking marble effect not only looks stunning but also enhances the flavor experience, making these cookies a standout for both their taste and visual appeal. Each bite delivers a delightful blend of chewy and soft textures, with a hint of warmth from spices that's perfect for the holiday season or any cozy gathering.

- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar, plus more for rolling
- ¼ cup (55 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- 2¼ cups (281 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (16 grams) all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
- 2 tablespoons (42 grams) unsulphured molasses
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) Chinese five-spice powder

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg and vanilla until well combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together 2¼ cups (281 grams) flour, baking soda, ginger, and baking powder. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined. Reserve half of dough (about 395 grams) in a medium bowl. Add molasses to remaining dough in mixer bowl, and beat at low speed until combined.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together cinnamon, five-spice powder, and remaining 2 tablespoons (16 grams) flour. With mixer on low speed, gradually add cinnamon mixture to molasses dough, beating until just combined.
5. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop doughs, and place on prepared pans. Take 1 portion of each dough, and press together, rolling in your hands to swirl together. Roll in granulated sugar. Repeat with remaining dough, and place at least 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
6. Bake until edges are set and centers are just barely puffed, 10 to 13 minutes. Let cool completely on pans. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

day
2

MOCHA SHORTBREAD COOKIES

Makes about 12 cookies

Infused with rich cocoa and coated in vanilla-scented espresso glaze, these buttery shortbread cookies deliver a sophisticated twist on the classic combo of chocolate and coffee. Pair them with your afternoon caffeine fix for an elevated seasonal snack.

- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¾ cup (90 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- 1¼ cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 6 tablespoons (30 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder
- Espresso Glaze (recipe follows)
- Garnish: turbinado sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until creamy, about 1 minute. Add confectioners' sugar, vanilla, and salt; beat until smooth, about 1 minute. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour and cocoa, beating until combined.
2. Turn out dough onto a sheet of parchment paper, and shape into a 6-inch square. Wrap in parchment, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight. (If refrigerating overnight, let dough stand at room temperature for 30 minutes before rolling.)
3. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to ⅜-inch thickness. Using a 2½- to 3½-inch holiday cutter dipped in flour, cut dough, rerolling scraps and cutting to use all dough. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Refrigerate for 20 minutes.
5. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C).
6. Bake until tops and edges are set, 10 to 15 minutes, rotating pans after 8 minutes of baking. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
7. Dip tops of cooled cookies in Espresso Glaze, letting excess drip off, and garnish with turbinado sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Espresso Glaze

Makes about 1 cup

- 2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) whole milk
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon (1 gram) espresso powder
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth. Use immediately.

GINGERBREAD OATMEAL SANDWICH COOKIES

Makes 12 sandwich cookies

Inspired by our never-ending love of Oatmeal Creme Pies, this holiday twist on the nostalgic cookie sandwiches combines the warm, aromatic spices in gingerbread with the hearty, chewy texture of oatmeal for a uniquely satisfying dessert. Sandwiched between the soft, spiced cookies is a luscious buttery filling that adds an extra layer of decadence.

Cookies:

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar*
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- ¼ cup (85 grams) unsulphured molasses
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract

1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
1 cup (80 grams) old-fashioned oats
1¾ teaspoons (3.5 grams) ground ginger
1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt
¾ teaspoon (1.5 grams) ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

Filling:
1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1 teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. For cookies: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, beating until well combined. Beat in molasses and vanilla extract until combined.
2. In medium bowl, whisk together flour, oats, ginger, salt, cinnamon, baking soda, and nutmeg until combined. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 30 grams each), and place 3 inches apart on prepared pans.
5. Bake until cookies flatten and tops look dry, 10 to 12 minutes. (Do not overbake.) Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. For filling: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, vanilla bean paste, and salt at medium speed until combined. Reduce mixer speed to low; gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until smooth and well combined, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Increase mixer speed to medium-high, and beat until fluffy, 1 to 2 minutes.
7. Transfer filling to a pastry bag fitted with a ¼-inch French star piping tip (Ateco #862). Pipe about 2 tablespoons (30 grams) filling onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on filling. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used C&H® Dark Brown Sugar.*

HAZELNUT-CHOCOLATE SNOWBALLS

Makes about 40 cookies

The snowy coating of confectioners' sugar adds a touch of holiday magic to these cookies, each bite a blissful combination of rich chocolate and nutty goodness. Perfect for holiday cookie exchanges, gift-giving, or simply enjoying with a cup of hot cocoa, these stuffed snowballs bring a touch of elegance to any celebration.

⅔ cup (160 grams) hazelnut-chocolate spread
1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
2 teaspoons (12 grams) vanilla bean paste
2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
1½ cups (144 grams) hazelnut flour
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. Using a teaspoon, scoop hazelnut-chocolate spread (5 grams each), and place on a prepared pan. Freeze until frozen solid, 1 to 2 hours, or overnight.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and granulated sugar at medium speed until creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla bean paste until well combined. Reduce mixer speed to low, and add flours and salt, beating until a dough forms.
5. Using a 1-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 17 grams each), and place on a clean surface. Divide each scoop into 2 roughly equal pieces, and flatten with the palm of your hand. Place 1 portion of frozen hazelnut-chocolate spread in center of 1 flattened dough piece; top with remaining piece. Pinch ends together to seal, and roll into a 1½-inch ball. Repeat with remaining dough and remaining frozen hazelnut-chocolate spread. Place 2 inches apart on remaining prepared pans. (If hazelnut-chocolate spread becomes too soft to work with, freeze again until solid, 30 minutes to 1 hour.)
6. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are lightly browned, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes.
7. In a small bowl, place confectioners' sugar. Roll each warm cookie in confectioners' sugar until well coated. Transfer to a wire rack, and let cool completely.
8. Roll cooled cookies in confectioners' sugar again. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Bonne Maman® Hazelnut Chocolate Spread.*

COOKIE BUTTER-STUFFED SNICKERDOODLES

Makes about 26 cookies

Cookie butter is a delicious spread made from speculaas, a type of spiced shortcrust cookie that's similar to a graham cracker or a crunchy gingersnap, and it's easily located with the jams and spreads in your favorite grocery store. Cookie butter pairs well with the caramelly cinnamon-sugar flavors of a snickerdoodle.

- 1 (14.1-ounce) jar (400 grams) cookie butter
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1½ cups (300 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- ½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- 1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract
- 2¾ cups (344 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
- 2½ teaspoons (5 grams) ground cinnamon
- Cookie Butter Glaze (recipe follows)
- Speculaas cookie crumbs, for sprinkling

1. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. Using a 1-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop cookie butter (about 15 grams each), and place on a prepared pan; freeze until solid, about 1 hour.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar, and brown sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cream of tartar, salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined.
5. In another medium bowl, whisk together cinnamon and remaining ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar.
6. Using a 1-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 17 grams each), and place on a clean surface. Gently flatten each with the palm of your hand. Place 1 portion of frozen cookie butter on 1 flattened dough scoop, and top with another flattened dough scoop. Press edges together to seal, and roll into a 1½-inch ball; place on a prepared pan. Repeat with remaining dough and remaining frozen cookie butter. Freeze until firm, about 10 minutes.
7. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
8. Toss dough balls in cinnamon sugar until well coated. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
9. Bake, one pan at a time, until edges are lightly browned but centers look slightly wet, 7 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
10. Drizzle Cookie Butter Glaze onto cooled cookies; sprinkle with cookie crumbs. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Cookie Butter Glaze

Makes about 1 cup

- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons (55 grams) heavy whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) cookie butter

1. In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth. Use immediately.

CRANBERRY THUMBPRINT COOKIES

Makes about 30 cookies

Brighten up your seasonal baking with these charming treats that feature a buttery, melt-in-your-mouth cookie base with a sweet and tangy cranberry filling. Customize them to your liking with any seasonal homemade jam or store-bought flavor you like. These cookies not only taste amazing but also add a splash of holiday color to your cookie platter.

- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1¾ cups (210 grams) confectioners' sugar, divided
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- 2 large egg yolks (37 grams), room temperature
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract
- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water
- Quick Cranberry Jam (recipe follows)
- Garnish: orange zest

1. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, 1¼ cups (150 grams) confectioners' sugar, and salt at medium speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Beat in egg yolks and almond extract. Add flour and baking powder, beating until combined.
3. Using a 1-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 17 grams each), and roll into 1-inch balls. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Using your thumb or the back of a small spoon, press an indentation in center of each ball. Freeze until firm, about 20 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
5. Bake until bottoms are golden brown, 14 to 16 minutes. Press down centers again. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. In a small bowl, whisk together 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water and remaining ½ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar until smooth.
7. Just before serving, spoon ½ teaspoon (3 grams) Quick Cranberry Jam into center of each cooled cookie. Drizzle with glaze, and garnish with orange zest, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Quick Cranberry Jam

Makes about ½ cup

- ¾ cup (100 grams) fresh or drained thawed frozen cranberries
- ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) orange zest

1. In a medium saucepan, bring cranberries, sugar, 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water, and orange zest to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium, and cook until thickened, about 6 minutes. Using the edge of a spatula, mash cranberries. Remove from heat, and let cool completely. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

day 8

FIG-PECAN COOKIES

Makes about 24 cookies

These delights feature a rich blend of sweet, chewy figs and crunchy pecans, all nestled within a buttery cookie base. The easy scoop-to-swirl technique creates a uniquely eye-catching cookie that instantly elevates your baking repertoire.

1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
2¾ cups (344 grams) all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
¾ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking powder
¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
½ cup (57 grams) chopped toasted pecans
½ to ¾ cup (160 to 240 grams) fig preserves, divided
Garnish: flaked sea salt

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, kosher salt, baking powder, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until just combined. Add pecans, beating until just combined. Fold in ½ cup (160 grams) preserves.
4. Using a 3-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 60 grams each), scooping directly into streaks of preserves and maintaining large swirls of it, and place on prepared pan. As you scoop, if you do not see large swirls of preserves anymore, fold up to remaining ¼ cup (80 grams) preserves into dough as needed. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight.
5. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
6. Place dough 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
7. Bake until edges are set, 15 to 18 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Garnish with sea salt, if desired. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

SALTED POPCORN SHORTBREAD

Makes about 24 cookies

Inspired by childhood traditions of creating popcorn garland, as well as feasting on the giant tins of popcorn that come around this time of year, this recipe gives a new and delicious way to use the crunchy-munchy snack in your holiday baking.

- **2 cups (20 grams) popped plain popcorn**
- **1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- **½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
- **1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
- **2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- **1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting**
- **½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse popcorn until it resembles fine crumbs.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until light and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Add egg yolk, beating until combined. Beat in vanilla.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together popcorn crumbs, flour, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add popcorn mixture to butter mixture, beating until a soft dough forms. Wrap dough tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to overnight. (If refrigerating for longer than 30 minutes, let dough stand at room temperature for 5 minutes before rolling.)
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 2½-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps and cutting to use all dough, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
6. Bake until edges are golden brown, 13 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

CUCCIDATI COOKIE CAKE

Makes 1 (9-inch) cookie cake

A delectable twist on the classic Italian fig-filled rolled cookies, this party-size cookie brings all the rich, spiced flavors of traditional cuccidati into a single, beautifully baked confection. Filled with a delicious nut mixture and lightly spiced with cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves, this cookie cake combines the best of both worlds—soft, tender dough with a sweet, chewy filling.

Dough:

- 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt
- 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract

Filling:

- 1½ cups (210 grams) dried figs, stemmed and chopped
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons (90 grams) water
- ¼ cup (85 grams) honey
- 1½ teaspoons (3 grams) orange zest
- ¼ cup (60 grams) fresh orange juice
- ¾ cup (105 grams) pitted dates, finely chopped
- ¾ cup (85 grams) chopped toasted walnuts
- ⅓ cup (43 grams) raisins
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves

Glaze:

- 2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) whole milk

Garnish: rainbow nonpareils

1. For dough: In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour, granulated sugar, salt, and baking powder until combined. Add butter, eggs, and vanilla; pulse just until a smooth dough forms. (Do not overprocess.)

2. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and knead for 2 to 3 minutes. Shape two-thirds of dough (about 544 grams) into a disk. Shape remaining one-third of dough (about 272 grams) into a disk. Wrap dough disks in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight.

3. For filling: In a medium saucepan, cook figs, ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons (90 grams) water, honey, and orange juice over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until figs are fork-tender, about 10 minutes. Transfer mixture to the work bowl of a food processor. Add orange zest, dates, walnuts, raisins, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves, and process until smooth. Cover until ready to use.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray a 9-inch round cake pan with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pan with parchment paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll larger dough disk into a 13-inch circle. Carefully transfer dough to prepared pan, pressing into bottom and up sides of pan. (If dough breaks, press it together and smooth it out with your fingers.) Spread filling into prepared dough with a small offset spatula. Using a small paring knife, trim excess dough to ¼ inch above top of filling. Using your fingers, gently fold ¼-inch edge of dough over filling, and smooth down slightly with your fingertips.

6. On a lightly floured surface, roll remaining dough disk into a 10-inch circle. Using a sharp knife and a 9-inch round cake pan as a guide, cut dough into a 9-inch circle. Carefully place dough on filling. Using your fingers or a fork, lightly press down on edges of dough to seal. Gently poke a few holes in top of dough with a fork or wooden pick.

7. Bake until top is lightly browned, 40 to 45 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Carefully remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

8. For glaze: In a medium bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth; spread onto cooled cookie, and garnish with nonpareils, if desired. Let stand until glaze is set, 15 to 20 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

PEPPERMINT-CHOCOLATE SANDWICH COOKIES

Makes 36 sandwich cookies

These delicious treats are our version of Candy Cane Joe-Joe's, the holiday edition of Trader Joe's staple chocolate cookie. Coated in a decadent ganache and filled with mint cream, these sandwich cookies are a homemade twist on a festive classic.

- ¼ cup plus 3 tablespoons (36 grams) black cocoa powder
- 3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- 5 tablespoons (70 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
- Peppermint Filling (recipe follows)
- Chocolate Ganache (recipe follows)
- Garnish: crushed peppermint candies

1. In a small bowl, whisk together cocoa and melted butter. Let cool slightly.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat softened butter, brown sugar, and salt at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in cocoa mixture. Add egg and vanilla, beating until well combined. Add flour, and beat until fully incorporated and a smooth dough forms. Shape dough into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight.
3. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
4. Roll dough between 2 pieces of parchment paper to ⅛-inch thickness. Freeze until firm, about 10 minutes.
5. Using a 1¾-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps and cutting to use all dough, and place 1 inch apart on prepared pan. (Refreeze dough if it gets too soft to work with.)
6. Bake until a slight indentation is left when top is pressed with a finger, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool completely on pan.
7. Spread or pipe 2 teaspoons (10 grams) Peppermint Filling onto flat side of half of cooled cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on filling. Using a fork, dip sandwich cookies in Chocolate Ganache, letting excess drip off, and place on a wire rack. Garnish with candies, if desired. Let stand until ganache is set, 15 to 20 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Peppermint Filling

Makes about 3 cups

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon (1 gram) peppermint extract

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until creamy, 2 to 3 minutes. Gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until combined. Beat in salt and peppermint extract until smooth.

Chocolate Ganache

Makes 2 cups

- 1 cup (240 grams) heavy whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 16 ounces (454 grams) dark chocolate, finely chopped

1. In a small saucepan, heat cream and butter over medium heat, stirring frequently, just until steaming and bubbles form around sides of pan. (Do not boil.)
2. In a medium heatproof bowl, combine hot cream mixture and chocolate. Let stand for 5 minutes; stir until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Use immediately.

VANILLA EGGNOG BLONDIES

Makes 9 blondies

This rich and chewy treat captures the essence of the beloved seasonal beverage. Fragrant vanilla, spicy nutmeg, and a splash of brandy fill each bite with familiar flavor and thick, moist texture. Feel free to swap whiskey, bourbon, rum, or cognac for brandy if you prefer.

Blondies:

- 1½ cups (330 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1¼ teaspoons (3.75 grams) kosher salt
- ¾ teaspoon (3.25 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) plus ⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg, divided
- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly
- 1½ tablespoons (22.5 grams) brandy
- 1½ tablespoons (20 grams) vanilla extract*
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- 1¾ cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar

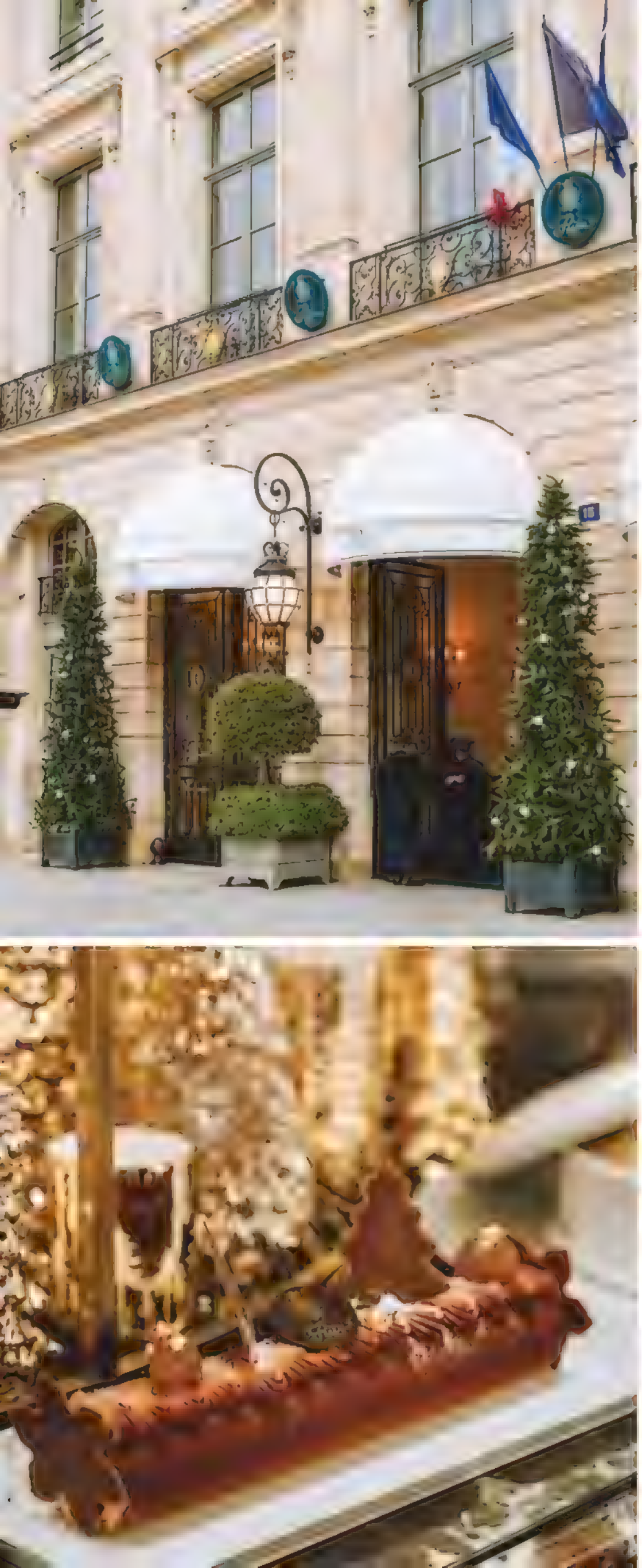
Glaze:

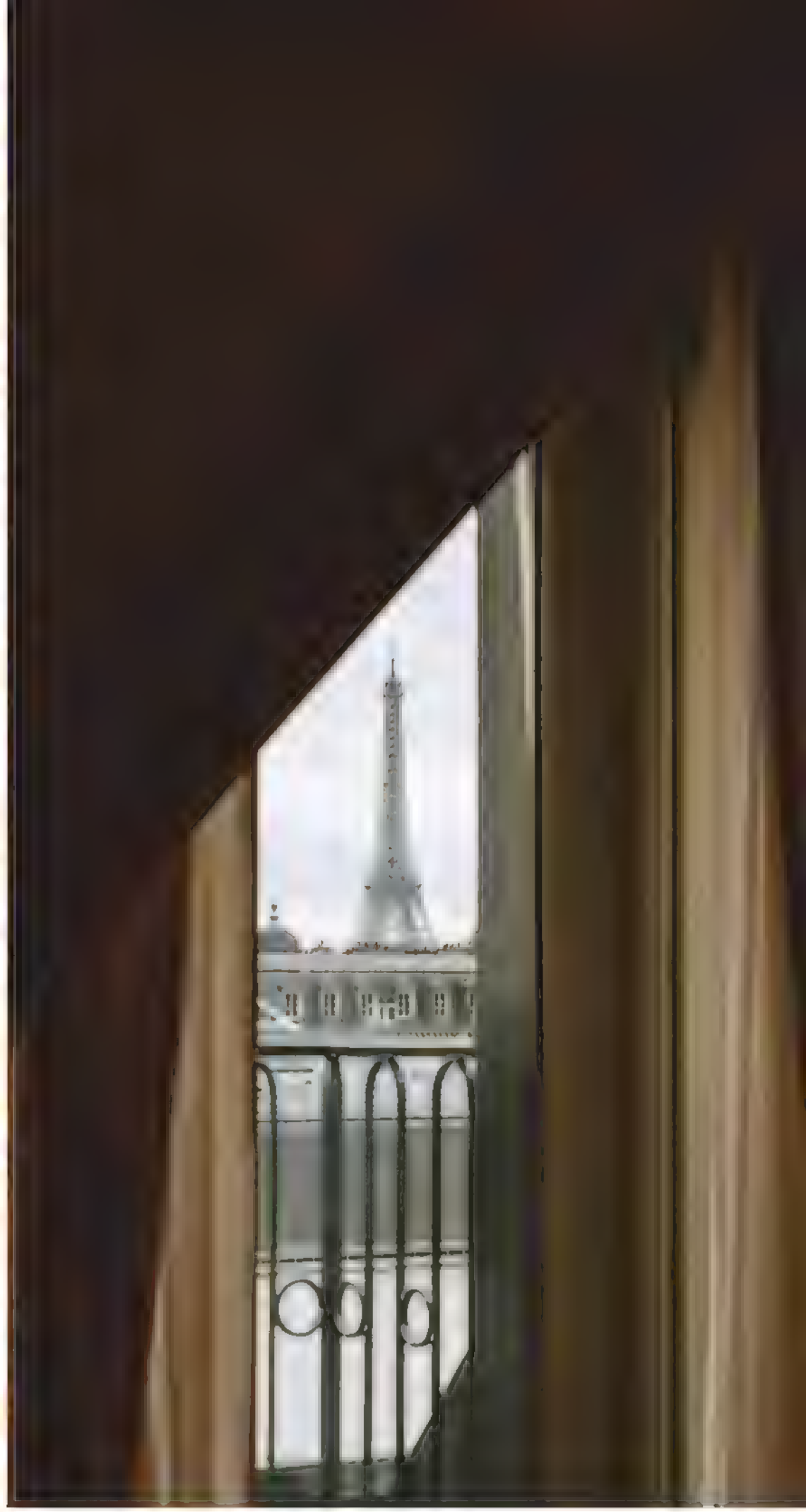
- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) whole milk
- 1 vanilla bean*, split lengthwise, seeds scraped and reserved
- ⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line an 8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. For blondies: In a large bowl, whisk together brown sugar, salt, baking powder, and ½ teaspoon (1 gram) nutmeg. Gradually add melted butter, whisking just until combined. Whisk in brandy and vanilla extract. Add eggs, one at a time, whisking until combined after each addition. Stir in flour until just combined. Spread batter into prepared pan.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together granulated sugar and remaining ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg; sprinkle onto batter.
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out with just a few moist crumbs, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack.
5. For glaze: In another small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, milk, reserved vanilla seeds, and nutmeg until smooth and well combined.
6. Using excess parchment as handles, remove cooled blondie from pan, and cut into squares. Drizzle with glaze; let stand until glaze is set, 15 to 20 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Rodelle Vanilla Extract and Vanilla Bean.*

De
Joyeuses
Fêtes au
RITZ PARIS





Paris is always a good idea, especially during the festive season . . . and a visit to the iconic Ritz Paris shouldn't be missed

BY BRIAN HART HOFFMAN / PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOANN PAI

During my 25 years of visiting Paris, France, I often passed through Place Vendôme, the historic square that the Ritz Paris calls home, but I never went inside. I'd stop to take photos of the majestic hotel that carries a world-renowned reputation . . . especially during the holidays, when elegant decorations draw you in and transport you to a magical wonderland. As I planned my first visit, I worried reality wouldn't live up to the fantasy in my mind. In December 2022 when I spent the holidays with my family in Paris, my mom's wish list included afternoon tea (*le goûter*) with my niece, Amelia, and sister-in-law, Katie, in the famed Salon Proust. It was the perfect way to begin our time in Paris.

Mom beamed as we walked in the hotel, and her beaming quickly turned to a gasp when she saw the stunning Christmas tree perfectly situated in the grand staircase that descends into the lobby. It was even better in person than I had dreamed. From the minute you arrive, the standard of service is impeccable, making every guest feel like the celebrities, royals, and dignitaries that often call the Ritz Paris their home while in the City of Light. We were seated in the intimate yet exquisite salon, surrounded by paneled walls, softened by draperies hanging in the arches, and anchored by bookcases and a marble fireplace. Champagne was poured, teas were brewed, and tiered stands were filled with decadent baked goods and pastries that made my baker's heart swell with excitement.

It's only fitting that the pastry program at this globally celebrated hotel is led by one of the world's best pastry chefs, François Perret. He's known for showcasing his respectful approach to classic French pâtisserie while pushing boundaries into the contemporary and artful aesthetics that define "haute pâtisserie," earning him the title of World's Best Pastry Chef in 2019 by Les Grandes Tables du Monde, an international association that celebrates excellence in fine dining. Under François's leadership, the pastry team at the Ritz Paris creates amazing variations of French favorites like madeleines, mille-feuilles, éclairs, and, most notably, his famed Ritz au Lait, a vamped-up take on rice pudding but so much more. Imagine a soft cookie base that's topped with an ultra-gourmet rice pudding and finished off with a trompe l'oeil-laden chocolate shell. Stop me when that doesn't sound good!

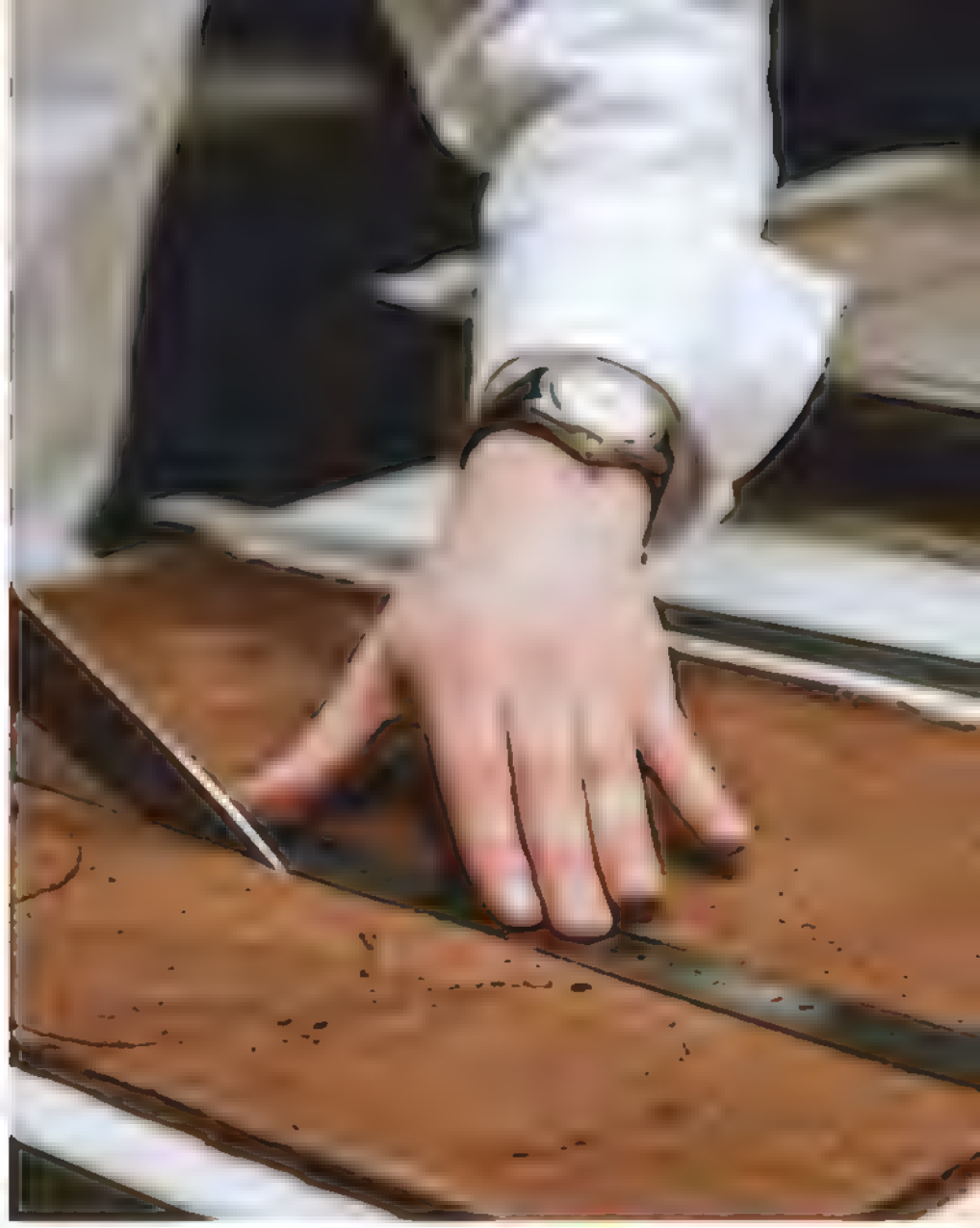
If that afternoon tea was the only time in my life that I would enjoy the Ritz Paris, it would have been enough. Sadly, it was my mom's only experience there, as she passed away seven months after our magical afternoon, anchoring it in my mind as a perfect final holiday moment with her. She told everyone about afternoon tea at the Ritz Paris, and I saw her beam each time she recalled the memories of that day. Her passion for an elegant afternoon tea paired with my heart's connection to Paris made the day absolute perfection.

A few months after Mom passed away, I found myself in Paris for some time of healing and reminiscing as I grappled with the loss that shook my world. I wanted to revisit places she and I had been together so I could feel a connection to her and celebrate a trip that was a dream come true for my family. But I wasn't strong enough to sit for tea. I knew it would be too emotional. So, I did the "me" thing and found myself in the kitchen, a place where therapy happens though the art of baking. I took a class in L'École Ritz Escoffier, the hotel's cooking school, and it was no accident that I signed up for the goûter class, making the sweet treats that grace the plates of the hotel's afternoon tea service. My class was led by the amazing pastry chef and instructor Alina Léon-Insull, and it was exactly what I needed.

If you find yourself in Place Vendôme, just off Rue Saint-Honoré, the luxury shopping street that draws visitors from around the world, you can experience the magic of the Ritz Paris without even walking in the doors. During the holiday season, an adorned chalet sells the hotel's iconic teddy bears, pastries from Ritz Paris Le Comptoir (the hotel's gourmet boutique), and *chocolat chaud* (hot chocolate).

Classes are taught in both French and English, offering the perfect scenario to learn new French words while receiving complete instruction in English. My baking partner and I bonded while making Les Barquettes, a boat-shaped cookie filled with fruit jam, and a Vanilla Loaf Cake with Crispy Corn Crumble finished with a Vanilla Ganache. It was quite rewarding to leave with Ritz Paris-quality baked goods that I prepared, along with a dose of baker's confidence and emotional strength that I needed. Even then, if that was the last of my visits to the Ritz Paris, it would have been enough.

Through both of those visits, I realized that my love for the Ritz Paris wasn't because of its recognition but because of its ability to create special and unique moments that impacted my life—as I know it does for each guest. I needed to plan a third visit because I had yet to stay in the amazing hotel . . . and it is a hotel after all. I knew I wanted to capture the magnificence of being a hotel guest during the holidays to share with you here. And what an experience that was—maybe the best of my life!



Last December, just a few days before Christmas, Brooke Bell and I arrived at the hotel with Paris-based photographer and friend Joann Pai. The sky was still inky when we arrived at a quiet Place Vendôme early in the morning to begin our photo shoot. We had a full day planned, beginning with a class at the Escoffier Cooking School, this time for entremets, an elegant dessert composed of cake layers encased in mousse and finished with a shimmering mirror glaze. In this class, Chef Alina Léon-Insull joined Chef Martin Millout, another outstanding pastry chef and instructor, to teach the art of assembling this pièce de résistance of the French pâtisserie world and perfect dinner party dessert or holiday table showstopper. Classes in their culinary school truly translate the wow factor of their stunning creations into practical information and education so you can re-create them at home.

Kumquat Layered
Mousse Cake
(*Entremets Chocolat, Mandarine et Kumquat*),
page 85

After class, we stopped in Bar Vendôme for a quick lunch before seeing the stunning pastries being presented at afternoon tea. I felt my mom alongside me as I walked back into the beautiful Salon Proust to see the decadence gracing the center table filled with baked goods, pastries, and confections that embody the magic of the season and festiveness that fills the Ritz Paris.

From there, we were invited to tour some of the hotel's iconic suites, and I'm still almost speechless recalling what I saw. Some were lucky to call this grande dame of hotels home over the years, including Gabrielle Chanel. Stepping into the Suite Coco Chanel, you'll experience a space designed to celebrate the signature look and color palette of the fashion icon's globally recognized style. A dreamy rooftop terrace with sweeping views of Paris and la Tour Eiffel from the bedroom of the Suite Mansart took my breath away. Finally, a true work of art and splendor, the Suite Impériale is a step back in time, with exquisite furnishings that transport you to the Palace of Versailles while situated perfectly in central Paris. Grandeur and elegance meet comfort and intimacy around every corner of the 142-room hotel, with each guest room conveying the ultimate in luxury.

Our day concluded with a visit to the iconic Hemingway Bar, named for Ernest Hemingway, who was a frequent guest of the Ritz Paris. The bar is cozy and unique, with amazing cocktails, including The Serendipity, a calvados and mint Champagne cocktail, and one of "the best dry martinis in the world." I sipped on a Manhattan, and all was right in the world.

That evening, I found myself wrapped in the hotel's plush robe, sitting in bed with a glass of Champagne and devouring the entremets we made in our morning class. Dessert in bed? As one does . . . when at the Ritz Paris.

When I woke up the next morning, I thought to myself that it must have been a dream, only to realize it was, in fact, a dream come true. As I left the hotel a few hours later, I beamed just like my mom did when she first walked in the doors of the Ritz Paris.

VISIT PARIS WITH ME AND STAY AT THE RITZ PARIS

Next December, join me to celebrate the 10th anniversary of *Bake from Scratch* in grand style during a never-to-forget Holiday Baking in Paris Retreat. To be the first to learn about this baking retreat, email *events@bakefromscratch.com*.

CHOCOLATE, MANDARIN ORANGE, AND KUMQUAT LAYERED MOUSSE CAKE

Entremets Chocolat, Mandarine et Kumquat

Makes 2 layered mousse cakes

Recipe adapted from Ecole Ritz Escoffier for US ingredients and equipment

CHOCOLATE SPONGE CAKE (SWISS ROLL)

Biscuit chocolat roulé

Makes 1 (21x15-inch) cake

- ⅔ cup (83 grams) cornstarch
- ½ cup (44 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder
- 206 grams egg whites (about 6 large), room temperature
- ⅔ cup (132 grams) plus ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
- 198 grams egg yolks (about 11 large), room temperature
- 6 tablespoons (83 grams) grapeseed oil*

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line the bottom of a 21x15-inch rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Sift together cornstarch and cocoa powder.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat together egg whites with ¼ cup (50 grams) sugar on medium speed; add the remaining ⅔ cup (132 grams) sugar little by little while whisking. The texture of the egg whites must be stiff peaks. Add the egg yolks all at once, and whisk on medium-high for a few seconds. Fold in the cocoa powder and starch using a rubber spatula. Finish with folding in the grapeseed oil (use immediately). Spread batter into prepared pan.
4. Bake until fragrant and sponge bounces back when lightly pressed, 12 to 14 minutes. Let cool completely in the pan.

**We used La Tourangelle Grapeseed Oil.*

CHOCOLATE AND CACAO NIB CRUNCH

Croustillant chocolat et grué de cacao

Makes about 2 cups

- ⅓ cup (48 grams) chopped 70% couverture dark chocolate (see Testing Notes)
- 1½ teaspoons (8 grams) coconut oil
- 1 cup (29 grams) puffed rice cereal
- ⅓ cup (29 grams) crushed cornflakes cereal
- 3 tablespoons (21 grams) cacao nibs
- 1½ teaspoons (3 grams) vanilla powder
- 1½ tablespoons (22 grams) hazelnut paste*

1. In a heatproof bowl over simmering water, melt the chocolate and coconut oil to 104°F (40°C). Pour over the cereals, cacao nibs, and vanilla powder. Combine, and add the hazelnut paste. Use immediately.

**We used Pariani 100% Pure Unsweetened Hazelnut Paste.*

KUMQUAT JAM

Confit kumquat

Makes about 6 tablespoons

- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water
- ¼ teaspoon powdered gelatin
- ½ cup (120 grams) kumquat purée (see Testing Notes)
- 2 teaspoons (14 grams) light corn syrup
- 1¼ teaspoons (5 grams) granulated sugar
- ¾ teaspoon (3 grams) powdered pectin
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) fresh lemon juice

1. Combine the water and gelatin, and refrigerate to make the gelatin mass.

2. Heat the kumquat purée and the corn syrup in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the sugar and pectin previously combined together. Bring to a boil and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the lemon juice and gelatin mass. Use immediately.

MANDARIN ORANGE CHOCOLATE CRÉMEUX

Crémeux chocolat–mandarine

Makes ⅔ cup

- ¼ cup (60 grams) mandarin pulp (see Testing Notes)
- 1 teaspoon (7 grams) light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon (7 grams) golden syrup
- ½ cup (72 grams) chopped 70% couverture dark chocolate
- 5 tablespoons (75 grams) heavy whipping cream (35% fat)

1. In a small saucepan, bring the mandarin pulp and syrups to a boil over medium heat. Pour over the chocolate. Wait a few seconds and then blend without incorporating any air. Add the heavy cream and then blend with an immersion blender.

DARK CHOCOLATE AND MILK CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

Mousse chocolat noir, chocolat lait

Makes 2½ cups

- ¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon (117 grams) chopped 70% couverture dark chocolate
- ¼ cup (36 grams) chopped 40% couverture milk chocolate
- 5½ tablespoons (83 grams) whole milk
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons (40 grams) heavy whipping cream (35% fat)

½ teaspoon (1 gram) vanilla powder
1½ teaspoons (10.5 grams) light corn syrup
¾ cup plus 2½ tablespoons (217 grams) heavy whipping cream (35% fat)

1. Place chocolates in a heatproof bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Melt chocolates together. Remove from heat.
2. Heat the milk and the first cream with the vanilla powder and corn syrup in a small saucepan over medium heat until the temperature reaches 176°F (80°C). Pour over previously melted chocolates and then blend without incorporating any air. Whip the second cream to stiff peaks. Fold the whipped cream into the ganache at 122°F (50°C) in 3 additions. Use immediately.

DARK CHOCOLATE MIRROR GLAZE

Glaçage miroir noir
Makes 2¼ cups

1 tablespoon plus ½ teaspoon (10 grams) powdered gelatin
¼ cup (60 grams) water
¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
7 tablespoons (147 grams) light corn syrup
5 tablespoons (75 grams) water
⅓ cup (100 grams) sweetened condensed milk
1 cup plus 1 tablespoon (153 grams) chopped 64% couverture chocolate

1. Combine the gelatin and the first measurement of water and refrigerate to make the gelatin mass.
2. Combine the sugar, corn syrup, and the second measurement of water in a medium saucepan and bring the temperature to 217°F (103°C). Pour over the sweetened condensed milk, chocolate, and gelatin mass. Blend without incorporating any air and pass through a fine-mesh sieve. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours.

ASSEMBLY

1. Cut out 4 (4¾-inch/12cm) circles and 2 (20x¾-inch/50x2cm) strips of sponge cake.
2. Place 2 (4¾-inch/12cm) ring molds on a rimmed baking sheet lined with parchment. Line molds with acetate.
3. Spread ⅓ cup (100 grams) warm crémeux into each prepared mold and freeze.
4. Spread about 3 tablespoons (57 grams) hot jam into each prepared mold and immediately freeze again.
5. Remove ring molds, and remove acetate. Place one circle of cake on each side of both frozen inserts. Place back in the freezer immediately.
6. Pour mousse into a large piping bag. Pipe 1¼ cups (238 grams) mousse into 2 (5½-inch/14cm) silicone molds. Place a frozen insert in each silicone mold. Level out to a smooth finish. Freeze assembled molds.
7. Place 2 ring molds on a cake board or platter. Divide the chocolate crunch between molds (about 1 cup/80 grams each) and make it flat. Remove ring molds. Freeze.
8. Warm up the mirror glaze to a temperature of 86°F to 95°F (30°C to 35°C).
9. Remove cakes from silicone molds, and place on a wire rack over a rimmed baking sheet. Blend and pour glaze over the frozen cakes. Place the cakes on prepared crunch bases. Place a strip of sponge cake at the base of the cake around the chocolate crunch; trim if needed. Decorate as desired.

➔ Visit *bakefromscratch.com/shoptheissue* to find the baking sheet, ring molds, acetate strips, and silicone molds we used to bake and assemble these cakes.

⁎ *testing notes*

Bake from Scratch adapted this recipe from Ecole Ritz Escoffier to utilize US ingredients and equipment but has otherwise left the recipe in its original form as much as possible. **The following retail-for-commerical ingredient swaps were made:** cornstarch for potato starch, coconut oil for cocoa butter, crushed cornflakes cereal for *feuilletine* (crumbled dried cooked crêpes), light corn syrup for glucose, and golden syrup for inverted sugar.

Couverture is a class or category of chocolate that has a higher percentage of cocoa butter relative to its other ingredients and works well for tempering and glazing.

Crémeux, meaning literally "creamy," indicates chocolate that is emulsified into a cream-based sauce.

To make mandarin pulp: Remove peel and pith, and place segments in a blender. Blend until uniform in size. Use immediately, or refrigerate in an airtight container.

To make kumquat purée: Boil kumquats in enough water to cover until fruit softens and color is bright. (It's OK if some split open.) Drain water, and place kumquats in a blender. Blend until smooth. Press through a fine-mesh sieve. Use immediately, or refrigerate in an airtight container.

After the mousse cakes are assembled, you will have leftover sponge cake. Sponge cake freezes well; wrap it tightly and freeze for another use.

Bûches de Noël

Create showstopping centerpieces for your holiday celebrations with these elegant and whimsical Christmas cakes

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
KYLE CARPENTER
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY
OLA AGBODZA AND
AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY
AARON CONRAD AND
KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY MAGGIE RATLIFF

Although these elaborate creations are most closely associated with the Christmas season, these cakes evolved out of a tradition that extends further back than the creation of Christianity. The word "yule" comes from the Old English word "geōl" and its Old Norse cousin "jōl," both of which broadly referred to wintertime and the corresponding feast or festival days during that time. According to pagan tradition, a log is meant to be burned on the winter solstice, the shortest and darkest day of the year, and is said to symbolize the coming of brighter days and good fortune during the next year. As the centuries turned and cultures and customs melded together, the yule log was adopted into Christian traditions, with many families continuing to burn them during the holidays. French chef Pierre Lacam transformed the tradition of the wooden yule log into a sweet, edible version and created the bûche de Noël, which translates directly to "Christmas log." Lacam has been credited with the creation ever since his recipe for the cake first appeared in his cookbook *Le Mémorial Historique et Géographique de la Pâtisserie* around the mid-1890s, though some say chef Antoine Charabot at La Maison Quillet invented it first in 1879. As bûches de Noël grew in popularity, many families chose to enjoy the cake version rather than burning a real log in their fireplace; this custom continues to thrive, with each new bûche iteration inspiring more creativity and deliciousness than the last.

Sugarplum Bûche de Noël

Makes 1 (16-inch) cake roll

This cake captures the magic and whimsy of the season in one sweet, decadent roll. Make this cake your own by decorating it with your favorite mixture of candies and sweets. Each bite will make you feel as if you're dancing among the sugarplum fairies.

- **4 large eggs (200 grams)**
- **¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar**
- **½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract**
- **½ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract**
- **¾ cup (94 grams) all-purpose flour**
- **¼ cup (32 grams) cornstarch**
- **½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder**
- **½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- **3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, melted and warm**
- **¼ cup (50 grams) rainbow jimmies***
- **Confectioners' sugar, for dusting**
- **Almond Simple Syrup (recipe follows)**
- **Cranberry Whipped Cream (recipe follows)**
- **Cranberry Meringue (recipe follows)**
- **Peppermint candies, gumdrops, mini gingerbread cookies*, sparkling sugar, and sprinkles, to decorate**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Lightly spray a 17¼x12¼-inch rimmed baking sheet with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper.
2. In the heatproof bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together eggs, granulated sugar, and extracts by hand. Place bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Cook, whisking occasionally, until an instant-read thermometer registers 110°F (43°C).
3. Carefully return bowl to stand mixer. Using the whisk attachment, beat at high speed until thick, tripled in volume, and ribbon-consistency, 3 to 4 minutes.
4. In a small bowl, sift together flour, cornstarch, baking powder, and salt. Add flour mixture to egg mixture in two additions, gently folding with a large balloon whisk just until combined.
5. Transfer 1 cup (75 grams) batter to a small bowl; whisk in warm melted butter until combined. Add butter mixture to remaining batter in two additions, folding just until combined after each addition. Gently fold in jimmies. Pour batter into prepared pan, spreading smooth with an offset spatula using as few strokes as possible.
6. Bake until lightly browned and cake springs back when gently pressed, 13 to 15 minutes. Immediately run a thin knife around edges of cake. Using a fine-mesh sieve, generously dust confectioners' sugar on top of cake. Place a clean kitchen towel on cake. Place a large cutting board on towel. Invert cake onto towel. Carefully remove hot pan, and gently peel off parchment. Generously dust confectioners' sugar onto cake. Place a clean piece of parchment on cake. Starting with one long side, immediately roll up cake, parchment, and towel together into a log. Place, seam side down, on a wire rack, and let cool completely.
7. Carefully unroll cooled cake; gently remove parchment on top. Using a pastry brush, brush Almond Simple Syrup onto cake. Spread Cranberry Whipped Cream onto cake, leaving a ½-inch border along long side that is bottom seam. Gently reroll cake without towel and parchment, making sure not to press too hard, gently lifting and tucking while rolling. Using towel as a sling, place cake on wire rack or a baking sheet. Refrigerate until set, about 1 hour.
8. Trim ½ inch off each end of cake if desired. Carefully transfer cake to a serving platter. Spread Cranberry Meringue on top and sides of cake. Decorate with candies, cookies, sparkling sugar, and sprinkles as desired. Best served same day as assembled. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Betty Crocker Rainbow Jimmies and Rustic Bakery Mini Ginger Baby Cookies.*

Almond Simple Syrup

Makes about ⅓ cup

- **¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
- **¼ cup (60 grams) water**
- **½ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract**

1. In a small saucepan, bring sugar and ¼ cup (60 grams) water to a low boil over medium heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat; stir in almond extract. Let cool completely.

Cranberry Whipped Cream

Makes about 3 cups

- **¾ cup (90 grams) fresh or drained thawed frozen cranberries**
- **⅓ cup (80 grams) water**
- **¼ teaspoon orange zest**
- **1½ cups (360 grams) cold heavy whipping cream**
- **¼ cup (30 grams) confectioners' sugar**

1. In a small saucepan, bring cranberries, ⅓ cup (80 grams) water, and orange zest to a boil over medium heat; cook, stirring occasionally, until cranberries soften and begin to burst, 5 to 7 minutes. Using a handheld immersion blender, blend cranberries until smooth. Cook, stirring frequently, until thick, jammy, and reduced to ½ cup (125 grams), 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool completely.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cold cream and confectioners' sugar at medium speed until soft peaks form. Add cooled cranberry mixture; beat until combined and medium-stiff peaks form, 2 to 3 minutes. Use immediately.

Cranberry Meringue

Makes about 5 cups

- **1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
- **⅓ cup (80 grams) unsweetened 100% cranberry juice**
- **3 large egg whites (90 grams), room temperature**
- **¼ teaspoon cream of tartar**
- **¼ teaspoon kosher salt**

1. In a small saucepan, bring sugar and cranberry juice to a boil over high heat, stirring just until sugar dissolves. (Do not stir once mixture starts to boil.) Cook until an instant-read thermometer registers 240°F (116°C).
2. Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites, cream of tartar, and salt at medium speed until soft peaks form, 2 to 3 minutes. With mixer on medium speed, add hot sugar syrup in a slow, steady stream. Increase mixer speed to high, and beat until stiff peaks form and bowl is cool to the touch, 2 to 3 minutes. Use immediately.

Rolling the Sugarplum Bûche

A simple log is the fundamental bûche de Noël shape, but the right technique for rolling the cake into a log is essential to prevent cracking and breaking as the cooled cake roll is filled

Visit *bakefromscratch.com /shoptheissue* for the rimmed baking sheet used for each bûche.

Working quickly while cake is still hot from the oven, dust the top with confectioners' sugar. Place a clean kitchen towel on the sugar-coated cake and pan and then top the towel with a sturdy cutting board. Carefully invert the cake out of the pan onto the towel and gently peel off the parchment paper. Dust the cake with confectioners' sugar again, and top with piece of parchment paper. Roll up the towel, cake, and parchment together in a log, and let it cool completely, seam side down, on a wire rack. **TIP:** The towel absorbs the steam and moisture from the cake as it cools, and the confectioners' sugar and parchment help keep the cake from sticking to the towel after it's unrolled.

Assembling the Sugarplum Bûche and Making the Meringue

We used cranberries' natural ruby-red hue to tint the whipped cream filling and meringue a blushing pale pink

The almond syrup helps keep the cake moist and soft, which also helps minimize cracking while rolling. After spreading on the filling, use the towel to help you roll up the cake with filling and to transfer it to a serving plate. Once the cranberry syrup has reached 240°F (116°C), slowly add it to the egg white mixture, and beat until it's thick, white, and fluffy. **TIP:** It's best to make the meringue frosting just before you're ready to serve the cake.

Red Velvet Bûche de Noël

Makes 1 (6- to 8-inch) cake

This vertically assembled cake is a stunning example of the modern iterations of bûche de Noël. Rather than rolling the cake into a long, slender log, it's cut into strips and wrapped around itself in layers that mimic the concentric rings of a growing tree. Meringue oyster mushrooms protrude from a toasted buttercream for the delicious illusion of a snow-covered tree stump.

- **4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature**
- **¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar**
- **1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour**
- **3 tablespoons (15 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder**
- **1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder**
- **½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- **3 tablespoons (42 grams) neutral oil**
- **2 tablespoons (30 grams) whole buttermilk**
- **1 tablespoon (18 grams) red gel food coloring**
- **2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- **1 teaspoon (5 grams) distilled white vinegar**
- **Cream Cheese Filling (recipe follows)**
- **Swiss Meringue (recipe follows)**
- **Meringue Oyster Mushrooms, Almond-Chocolate Pine Cones, and Sugared Cranberries and Rosemary (recipes on pages 101–102), and confectioners' sugar, to decorate**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray a 17¼x12¼-inch rimmed baking sheet with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pan with parchment paper; spray parchment.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat eggs and granulated sugar at high speed until thick, pale, and ribbon-consistency, 5 to 7 minutes. Sift flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt onto egg mixture. Gently fold with a balloon whisk until combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together oil, buttermilk, food coloring, vanilla, and vinegar; add 1 cup (75 grams) egg mixture, and stir until combined. Fold oil mixture into remaining egg mixture until combined, scraping bottom of bowl. Pour batter into prepared pan, spreading smooth with an offset spatula.
4. Bake until set and top springs back when gently touched, 15 to 18 minutes. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack.
5. Loosen cooled cake from sides of pan if needed. Using a serrated knife, trim ½ inch of each short side of cake. Cut cake into 4 (12x4-inch) pieces, being sure to cut through the parchment as well; use scissors if needed. Carefully remove each cake piece, with parchment attached, from pan. Spread ⅔ cup (115 grams) Cream Cheese Filling onto each cake piece.
6. Starting with one short side, roll up 1 cake piece into a log, removing parchment as you roll, and place vertically in center of a cake plate. Carefully wrap a second cake piece around center roll, removing parchment as you roll. Repeat with remaining cake pieces, creating a spiral. Cover and refrigerate until firm, about 4 hours.
7. Spoon Swiss Meringue into a pastry bag fitted with a medium open star piping tip (Ateco #824). Starting at base of cake, pipe meringue vertically up side of cake. Repeat all around cake, occasionally piping small circles to resemble the knots of a tree. Pipe a spiral on top of cake, covering ends of vertical lines as you reach outer edge. Using a handheld kitchen torch, carefully toast meringue as desired.
8. Decorate with Meringue Oyster Mushrooms, Almond-Chocolate Pine Cones, Sugared Cranberries and Rosemary, and confectioners' sugar as desired. Best served same day as made and assembled. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Cream Cheese Filling

Makes about 2½ cups

- **1 (8-ounce) package (226 grams) cream cheese, softened**
- **½ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- **1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- **¾ cup (180 grams) cold heavy whipping cream**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cream cheese at medium speed until smooth. Add confectioners' sugar and vanilla, beating until combined; scrape bottom and sides of bowl. With mixer on medium-low speed, slowly add cold cream, beating until combined. Scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Beat at medium-high speed until stiff peaks form, 1 to 2 minutes. Use immediately.

Swiss Meringue

Makes about 5 cups

- **1¼ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar**
- **5 large egg whites (150 grams), room temperature**
- **¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt**
- **½ teaspoon (1 gram) cream of tartar**
- **1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract**

1. In the top of a double boiler, whisk together sugar, egg whites, salt, and cream of tartar. Cook over simmering water, stirring occasionally, until a candy thermometer registers 140°F (60°C).
2. Transfer mixture to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Beat at high speed until mixture has cooled and tripled in volume, 5 to 7 minutes. Beat in vanilla.
3. Reserve 1 cup meringue (about 95 grams) to make Meringue Oyster Mushrooms, if desired. Use remaining meringue immediately.

Cutting, Filling, and Assembling the Red Velvet Bûche

Layers of cake are wrapped around each other in concentric circles to create this epic tree stump

Cut cake pieces, including parchment, and gently spread filling onto each piece. Starting with one cake piece, roll it into a log, removing parchment as you roll, and place vertically in center of a cake plate. Carefully wrap a second piece around center roll, removing parchment as you go. Repeat this process with the remaining cake pieces to create a large spiral. **TIP:** Try to place the ends of each cake piece as close to each other as possible to minimize gaps.

Piping Meringue onto the Red Velvet Bûche

Embrace a loose, organic feel when piping the meringue to reflect how a snow-covered tree stump appears in nature

Starting from the bottom of the cake, pipe meringue onto sides vertically in strips, occasionally piping small circles to resemble a knot of a tree. Don't worry about keeping the strips straight. After the sides are covered, pipe meringue into a spiral to cover the top of the cake. Once fully covered, use a handheld kitchen torch to carefully brown meringue as desired. **TIP:** Do not place this cake in the oven to brown the meringue.

Deliciously Delightful Décor

The joy of assembling a bûche de Noël largely comes from the decoration, when you get the fun of adding your own flair to your cake. From simple sugar-coated berries and herbs to lifelike nut-and-chocolate pine cones, pair these handcrafted embellishments with your favorite store-bought items to create your custom look.

Meringue Oyster Mushrooms

Makes 15 to 20 mushrooms

1 cup (95 grams) Swiss Meringue (recipe on page 96)
Unsweetened cocoa powder, for dusting

1. Preheat oven to 225°F (107°C). Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Transfer Swiss Meringue to a pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch round piping tip (Ateco #806).
3. Generously dust cocoa onto prepared pan. Pipe meringue in varying ½- to 1-inch-wide dollops 2 to 3 inches apart on parchment (**A**). Lightly dust cocoa onto meringue (**B**). Cover with a sheet of parchment paper; gently press circles to flatten to about ½ inch thick (**C**). Place another rimmed baking sheet on parchment (**D**).
4. Bake for 1 hour and 20 minutes. Turn off oven, and let meringues cool in oven with door closed for at least 1 hour before using, or until ready to use. When ready to use, gently remove top parchment, invert meringues, and gently remove remaining parchment. Best served same day as made. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

A

B

C

D

Almond-Chocolate Pine Cones

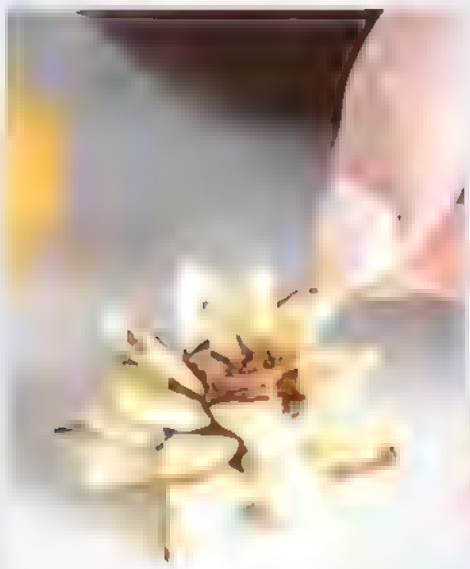
Makes about 4 large, 6 medium, or 12 small pine cones

3½ ounces (99 grams) almond paste
1 cup (104 grams) toasted sliced almonds
1 ounce (28 grams) dark chocolate, melted
Unsweetened cocoa powder, for dusting
Confectioners' sugar, for dusting

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Divide almond paste into 1-teaspoon (8-gram) portions for small pine cones, 2-teaspoon (16-gram) portions for medium, or 1-tablespoon (24-gram) portions for large; shape each portion into a cone with a flat base (**A**).
3. Dip one end of an almond slice into melted chocolate, and starting at bottom of cone, press into cone (**B**). Repeat procedure to cover cone, staggering and overlapping almonds all around cone (**C**). Refrigerate in an airtight container for at least 1 hour before using or for up to 3 days. Just before using, lightly dust with cocoa (**D**). Lightly dust with confectioners' sugar for a snowy look if desired.

A

B



C

D

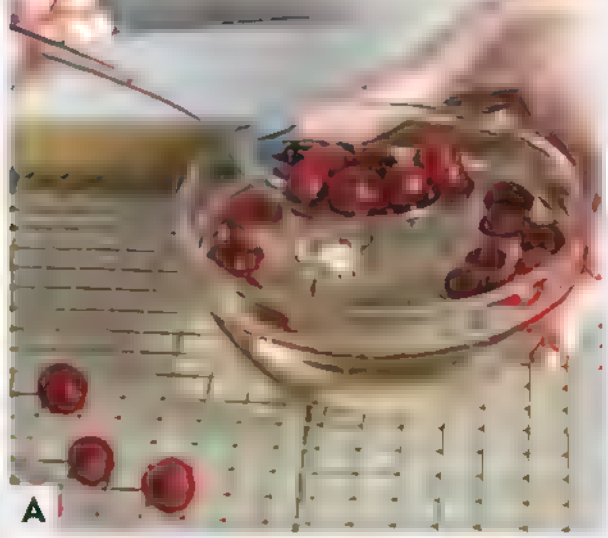
Sugared Cranberries and Rosemary

Makes about 2 cups each

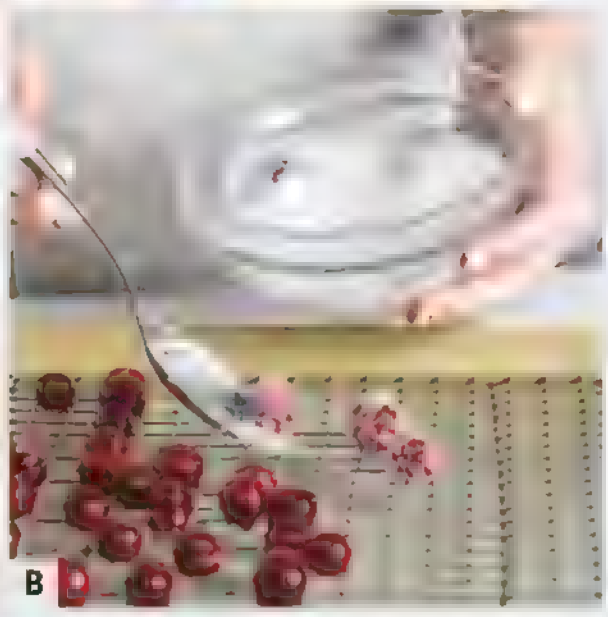
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
- ½ cup (120 grams) water
- 20 fresh sprigs rosemary (27 grams)
- 2 cups (220 grams) fresh or drained thawed frozen cranberries
- 2 cups (400 grams) sparkling sugar

1. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper, and place a wire rack on top of each.
2. In a small saucepan, whisk together granulated sugar and ½ cup (120 grams) water. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat; reduce heat to low, and simmer for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool for 10 to 15 minutes.
3. Dip rosemary sprigs in syrup until just coated in syrup; place on one prepared rack. Repeat procedure with cranberries, using a slotted spoon to remove (**A**). Let stand until dry, about 1 hour.
4. In a medium bowl, place sparkling sugar. Dredge rosemary in sugar to coat; return to wire rack. Repeat procedure with cranberries, using a slotted spoon (**B**). Let stand until dry, about 1 hour. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

A


A

B


B

origin of a classic

DISCOVERING *the* LEGENDARY *Mont Blanc*

Explore the rich history and irresistible allure of Mont Blanc, a sophisticated confection with intricate layers and delicate flavors

The story of this beloved dessert unfolds in the majestic setting of the French Alps. It is inspired by the breathtaking beauty of Mount Blanc, France's highest peak, straddling France, Italy, and Switzerland. The mountain's summit is often veiled in mist and adorned with glistening snow. The Mont Blanc, meaning "white mountain," has become an enduring symbol in French pastry, blending the natural splendor of the Alps with France's rich culinary traditions.

While tales trace the Mont Blanc dessert as far back as the 15th century in the Kingdom of Savoy during the Middle Ages and to Renaissance-era Italy, historical records place its recognition much later, appearing by name in the second half of the 19th century. Parisian pastry shops like Pâtisserie des Princes played a significant role in popularizing this confection. The Mont Blanc recipe surged in status around the turn of the 20th century, earning mentions in prominent cookbooks such as Urban Dubois's *The Household Cookery Book*, published in 1871.

At the heart of the Mont Blanc dessert is the chestnut—a cherished ingredient in Alpine cuisine, known for its earthy sweetness, warm and nutty notes, and creamy texture. Abundant in the mountain regions of France and Italy, chestnuts were a fitting choice for a dessert celebrating local flavors.

BY AMBER WILSON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANIE WELBOURNE STEELE
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY COURTNI BODIFORD

To create the paste that forms the centerpiece of the Mont Blanc, chestnuts are cooked and meticulously mashed until they reach a velvety-smooth consistency. Sugar enhances their natural sweetness, and hints of vanilla and rum elevate the flavor profile, resulting in a chestnut cream that is rich, nutty, and imbued with a depth that reflects the essence of the mountains.

On top of the buttery *pâte sucrée* base is a layer of whipped cream crowned with a meringue cookie, resembling the snowy cap of Mont Blanc. The crisp texture of the meringues contrasts beautifully with the second layer of whipped cream, symbolizing the snowdrift surrounding the mountain's peak. The rich, earthy chestnut cream is delicately piped in distinct spiraling strands, reminiscent of windswept snow patterns on a rocky mountainside. A dusting of confectioners' sugar adds a final touch, echoing the glistening snowflakes that dance in the mountain breeze.

Traditionally served directly on a plate, modern interpretations often feature Mont Blanc atop a delicate meringue base. Angelina, a renowned Parisian tearoom and pastry shop since 1903, has left an indelible mark with its signature Mont Blanc—a unique combination of crisp meringue, airy whipped cream, and chestnut paste vermicelli.

Over centuries, the Mont Blanc has transcended its Alpine origins, becoming a treasured symbol of French culinary heritage. It remains elegantly simple in France, served on a plate or atop meringue. The Italian version, Monte Bianco, is deeper in flavor thanks to the addition of chocolate and milk. Meanwhile, in Japan, inventive twists like green tea and berries are added to the chestnut purée before it's piped onto a sponge cake.

With its deep history and exquisite flavors, Mont Blanc embodies the artistry and passion that define French pâtisserie, captivating hearts and palates worldwide.

MONT BLANC

Makes 8 pastries

This chestnut cream-topped pastry resembles France's tallest mountain, Mont Blanc. Beneath the piped chestnut cream lie hidden layers of whipped cream and a crisp meringue. The sweet, earthy chestnut flavor pairs perfectly with buttery pâte sucrée crust, creating a beautifully balanced and delicately flavored dessert. A snowy dusting of confectioners' sugar adds a festive final touch.

1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar, divided
1¼ cups (439 grams) unsweetened pure chestnut paste*
1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) dark rum (optional)
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
¾ cup (180 grams) cold heavy whipping cream
Pâte Sucrée Tart Shells (recipe follows)
8 Meringue Cookies (recipe follows)
Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat 1¼ cups (150 grams) confectioners' sugar, chestnut paste, rum (if using), and vanilla at medium-low speed until well combined and smooth, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl, and refrigerate until ready to use.
2. Clean bowl of stand mixer and whisk attachment. Using the whisk attachment, beat cold cream and remaining ¼ cup (30 grams) confectioners' sugar at medium-low speed until medium peaks form, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Spread 1 tablespoon (5 grams) whipped cream into bottom of 1 Pâte Sucrée Tart Shell. Top with 1 Meringue Cookie. Spread 3 tablespoons (15 grams) whipped cream onto and around cookie, creating a point shape on top to resemble a mountain peak.
4. Spoon chestnut cream into a pastry bag fitted with a large grass piping tip (Ateco #234). Starting at base of whipped cream, pipe chestnut cream in a spiral pattern onto whipped cream to fully cover. Repeat with remaining

whipped cream, remaining Pâte Sucrée Tart Shells, remaining Meringue Cookies, and remaining chestnut cream. Serve immediately, or refrigerate for up to 5 hours before serving. Just before serving, garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Best served same day as made and assembled.

**We used Clement Faugier Unsweetened Chestnut Purée.*

*pro tip
If you have a turntable, it will make piping the chestnut cream onto the whipped cream much easier.

Pâte Sucrée Tart Shells
Makes 8 crusts

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ⅔ cup (80 grams) confectioners' sugar
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- 1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, confectioners' sugar, and salt at medium speed until pale and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes. Add egg, beating until combined, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating until just combined. Turn out dough, and shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm, at least 1 hour, or for up to 1 week.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 3¾-inch round cutter, cut 8 rounds, rerolling scraps as needed. Gently press rounds into bottom and up sides of 8 (3-inch) round fluted removable-bottom tart pans. Place on a rimmed baking sheet. Refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
4. Top each prepared crust with parchment paper, letting ends extend over sides of pans. Add pie weights.
5. Bake until edges are set, about 15 minutes. Carefully remove parchment and pie weights, and bake until bottoms are dry and edges are lightly browned, 5 to 7 minutes more. Let cool completely in pans on wire racks. Remove crusts from pans before using.

*pro tip
Dough can also be frozen for up to 2 months. Let it thaw overnight in the refrigerator before using.

Meringue Cookies
Makes 10 cookies

- 2 large egg whites (60 grams)
- ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar

1. Preheat oven to 225°F (107°C). Using a permanent marker, draw 10 (2¼-inch) circles on a sheet of parchment paper; place parchment, marker side down, on a rimmed baking sheet.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites, cream of tartar, and salt at low speed until foamy. With mixer on high speed, add sugar in a slow, steady stream. Beat until stiff peaks form.
3. Spoon meringue into a pastry bag fitted with a large round piping tip (Ateco #807). Holding tip perpendicularly 1½ inches above prepared pan, pipe meringue into large rounds about 1½ inches tall.
4. Bake until meringues look dry and easily peel away from parchment, 1 hour and 20 minutes to 1½ hours. Turn oven off, and let meringues cool completely in oven with door closed, at least 2 hours, or up to overnight. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

gold standard

QUINTESSENTIAL AND CLASSIC

OUR BENCHMARK CLASSIC BAKE VERSION OF A

A little sugar and spice make this cake all things nice

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANIE WELBOURNE STEELE
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY OLA AGBODZA
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON
STYLING BY COURTNI BODIFORD

GINGERBREAD CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

This soft and moist stir-together cake blends warm spices with rich molasses, adding aromatic depth of flavor. It comes together quickly and easily, needing only a dusting of confectioners' sugar, to be a fitting finish to any holiday gathering.

2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
2¼ teaspoons (4.5 grams) ground ginger
1¼ teaspoons (3.75 grams) kosher salt
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
¼ teaspoon ground cloves
¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar*
¾ cup (255 grams) unsulphured molasses
½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, melted
2 large eggs (100 grams)
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
¾ cup (180 grams) hot water (128°F/53°C to 130°F/55°C)
Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, ginger, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together brown sugar, molasses, melted butter, eggs, and vanilla. Whisk in flour mixture just until a few dry streaks remain. Whisk in ¾ cup (180 grams) hot water until combined. Pour batter into prepared pan.
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Just before serving, garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used C&H® Dark Brown Sugar.*

The Method to Our Magic

Using unsulphured molasses is important to the richly spiced flavor of this gingerbread cake

Sulphured molasses is made from younger, unripe sugarcane plants and is treated with sulphur dioxide to preserve the cane until it can be processed, and it imparts a subtle chemical note to the final product. Unsulphured molasses is made from ripe sugarcane and does not have added chemicals, so it has a more natural taste. There is one more secret to the success of this cake. By adding hot water to the batter, you give the baking soda a kick-start and thin the batter a little to allow for better mixing. This results in a soft, tender, delicious cake every time.

BELGIAN BLISS

Enjoy a luxurious holiday breakfast treat with these crunchy-sweet waffles

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANIE WELBOURNE STEELE / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY AMANDA STABILE
FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON / STYLING BY SIDNEY BRAGIEL

LIÈGE WAFFLES

Makes 6 waffles

Liège waffles originated from the city of Liège in Belgium, where they have been a beloved treat for centuries. Made with a brioche-like dough, they're incredibly soft and buttery, and the pearl sugar within melts slightly, creating a decadent crunch and pockets of rich, caramelized sweetness. Although Liège waffles are perfect on their own, feel free to serve them with any toppings you like.

3¼ cups (406 grams) all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar
1 (0.25-ounce) package (7 grams) instant yeast*
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly
¾ cup (180 grams) warm milk (120°F/49°C to 130°F/54°C)
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract
1 cup (156 grams) Belgian pearl sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together 2¼ cups (281 grams) flour, granulated sugar, yeast, and salt by hand until combined. Add melted butter, warm milk, egg, egg yolk, and vanilla. Using the paddle attachment, beat at low speed until combined. Add remaining 1 cup (125 grams) flour, and beat until a shaggy dough forms, 3 to 4 minutes. (Dough will be very soft but should be smooth and not overly sticky.) Cover and let rest in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) for 30 minutes.

2. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and gently knead in pearl sugar. Divide dough into 6 portions (about 166 grams each).

3. Heat a Belgian waffle iron according to manufacturer's instructions, and spray with cooking spray. Lightly flatten 1 portion of dough, and place on prepared iron. Cook according to manufacturer's instructions until golden brown. Repeat with remaining dough, spraying iron with cooking spray after every other waffle. Serve warm.

**We used Red Star® Instant Yeast.*

Head to *bakefromscratch.com/shop* for Belgian pearl sugar.

*pro tip

Don't skimp on the resting time at the end of step 1. This allows the gluten in the dough to relax so the dough will spread evenly into the waffle iron. Cooked waffles can be frozen in a resealable plastic bag for up to 2 months. Reheat them in a 300°F (150°C) oven.

Simply Sensational

Our Gold Standard Gingerbread Cake is delicious on its own, but when I transform it into layers and top it with rich, creamy frosting, it becomes more than the sum of its parts. I love the look of a naked cake, but I make sure there's plenty of frosting! Topped with sugared cranberries and rosemary, this cake is my ideal of easy yet elegant holiday baking.

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GINGERBREAD LAYER CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

2 recipes Gingerbread Cake (recipe on page 108)
Cream Cheese Frosting (recipe follows)
Sugared Cranberries and Rosemary (recipe on page 102)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray 3 (8-inch) round cake pans with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pans with parchment paper.
2. Divide Gingerbread Cake batter among prepared pans (about 3 cups or 750 grams each).
3. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 40 to 45 minutes. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, gently remove parchment, and let cool completely on wire racks.
4. Level cooled cake layers if desired. Place 1 cake layer on a serving plate. Spread 1½ cups (about 375 grams) Cream Cheese Frosting onto cake layer. Top with second cake layer, and spread 1½ cups (about 375 grams) frosting on top. Top with remaining cake layer.
5. Spoon remaining frosting into a pastry bag; cut a ¼-inch opening in tip. Pipe frosting on top of cake; smooth even. Pipe frosting onto sides of cake; using a bench scraper or large offset spatula held against sides of cake, scrape frosting into a thin, even layer until cake layers are slightly visible. Smooth or swoop top of cake as desired. Just before serving, garnish with Sugared Cranberries and Rosemary, if desired. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Cream Cheese Frosting

Makes about 6 cups

2 (8-ounce) packages (454 grams) cream cheese, room temperature
1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
8 cups (960 grams) confectioners' sugar
2½ teaspoons (10 grams) vanilla extract

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese, butter, and salt at high speed until smooth and creamy, stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until combined and stopping to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla. Increase mixer speed to high, and beat until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Use immediately.

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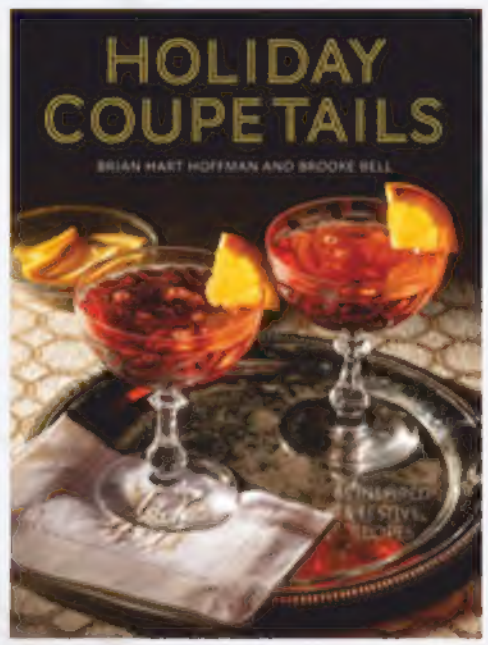

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